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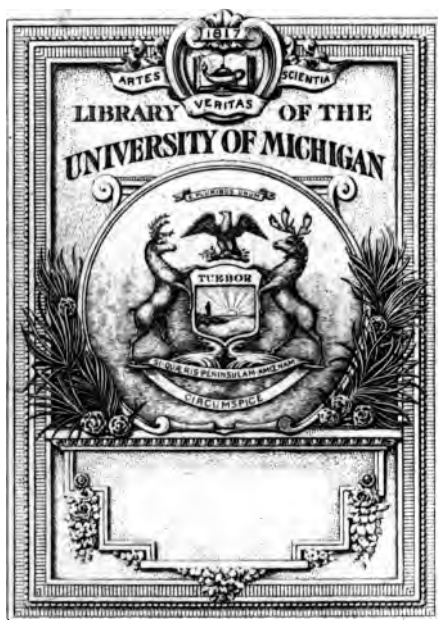
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Photo Arnold Genthe

Three qualities are indispensable  
for success on the stage —  
Personality, Pluck and  
Perseverance.

David Belasco.

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**LIPPINCOTT'S TRAINING SERIES**

# **TRAINING FOR THE STAGE**

***SOME HINTS FOR THOSE ABOUT TO  
CHOOSE THE PLAYER'S CAREER***

BY

**ARTHUR HORNBLOW**

**AUTHOR OF "BY RIGHT OF CONQUEST", "THE END OF THE  
GAME", "THE MASK", ETC.**

***EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS***



**WITH A FOREWORD BY  
MR. DAVID BELASCO**

**PHILADELPHIA & LONDON  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY**



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**"I THINK I LOVE AND REVERENCE ALL ARTS  
EQUALLY, ONLY PUTTING MY OWN JUST ABOVE  
THE OTHERS ; BECAUSE IN IT I RECOGNISE  
THE UNION AND CULMINATION OF MY OWN.  
TO ME IT SEEMS AS IF, WHEN GOD CONCEIVED  
THE WORLD, THAT WAS POETRY ; HE FORMED  
IT, AND THAT WAS SCULPTURE ; HE COLORED  
IT, AND THAT WAS PAINTING ; HE PEOPLED  
IT WITH LIVING BEINGS, AND THAT WAS  
THE GRAND, DIVINE, ETERNAL DRAMA."**

**—CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN.**



## PREFACE

THE question most frequently put to me during the twenty-five odd years I have been associated with the theatre and its people has been: "Do you advise me to go on the stage?" This naïve query often comes from perfect strangers, persons never seen or heard of before. I am asked to form an opinion of an unknown correspondent's chances of success in what is perhaps one of the most difficult and precarious of the professions, without having an opportunity to judge of his or her personality, qualifications, or talent.

The late Joseph Jefferson, when called upon to answer this same question, replied in his characteristic way: "To those who may wish to follow the theatrical profession and who have an earnest desire, beyond the



## PREFACE

exhibition of their own vanity, to study the art of acting for its sake rather than for their own, I should desire to give all the information in my power, but to those who have nothing else to do and who desire to go upon the stage for amusement I would give the same advice that *Punch* did to people about to marry: 'Don't!'"

— My own answer invariably has been: I do not advise anyone to go on the stage. Almost any other vocation you could select is likely to bring you far greater happiness and larger reward for honest effort made. But if the call to the stage persists, if the desire to wear the sock and buskin will not be downed, and you are sure you have the proper equipment—a good voice, pleasing stage presence, some intelligence and a fair education, added to good health and the artistic temperament—then plunge in and God be with you. In any case, be sure you

## PREFACE

begin right, and avoid the mistakes that have led many stage beginners to their undoing.

In these pages an attempt is made to give the young man or young woman attracted to the stage as a career the information regarding its opportunities and requirements which all beginners naturally seek. To most of them the theatre is a strange land, a world of fascination and mystery. Their acquaintance with it is only of the most superficial kind. Perhaps they are students of the drama, or love theatre-going, or have acted with success in some amateur theatricals, which has fired them with ambition to join the professional ranks. A very easy and congenial way of earning one's living, they argue, this wearing good clothes and drawing fat salaries for a few hours' work—really play—each evening! They envy the popular leading man whose portrait appears in every newspaper and magazine and whose

## PREFACE

name, outlined in electric letters two feet high, makes one blink along Broadway. They know nothing of the difficulties this actor had to overcome before he attained success. They see only the public favorite, the matinee idol, and they ask, "If he can do it, why not I?" They know nothing of the reverse side of the medal. How should they?

I have tried to present an accurate picture of conditions on the stage as they are to-day, pointing out the various ways in which the tyro may succeed in securing a foothold on the boards, suggesting what he must do to maintain himself there and gain the favor of the public, dwelling on the generous emoluments that fall to the popular actor, but at the same time concealing nothing of the difficulties and disappointments that beset the path to success.

To analyze or discourse at any length

## PREFACE

upon the art of acting is not the purpose of this book. It is with the practical, rather than with the purely academic and theoretical side, of the players' calling that the following pages are intended to deal, and in presenting these practical issues the writer has been careful to trust less his own judgment than the opinions of those who, having themselves achieved success on the boards, cannot be charged with being ignorant of what they are talking about. If actors who have won world fame tell what self-preparation they went through to make that fame possible, they are worth listening to. When experienced stage directors explain what qualities they look for in the stage aspirant and what the novice must measure up to before he or she can hope to gain a footing on the metropolitan stage, their opinions are likely to carry weight.

If this book only serves to discourage a

## PREFACE

few of the hundreds of well-intentioned but misguided young people who, having no talent for the stage, are attracted to it merely by the glamour of the footlights and are about to rush into a career for which they are manifestly unfitted, it will perhaps be considered to have rendered a real service not only to them, but also to the cause of the theatre. If, on the contrary, it helps to sift the dross from the gold, if it encourages real ability wherever it may be found and helps to spur on to renewed effort those in whom the call to the boards is irresistible, and who may one day shed lustre on the stage, I shall feel it has not been written in vain.

A. H.

New York, May, 1916.

# FOREWORD

BY MR. DAVID BELASCO

IN preparing oneself for the dramatic profession the one essential and indispensable thing is not to enter upon the career because you want to do so, but because you are fitted to do so. Most, if not all, of those who fail on the stage, on investigation will be found to be persons who began the work without possessing the slightest qualification or aptitude for acting.

In my long experience as a writer and producer of plays, I have come in contact with many young persons who were quite convinced that they had within them the makings of another Edwin Booth or Mary Anderson, yet when I came to talk with them it did not take me long to realize that they had neither the ability nor the tem-

## FOREWORD

perament one needs for success on the stage.

My opinion as to the necessary qualifications for an actor or actress will be found elsewhere in this volume. \ There is a general belief that youth and beauty are 90 per cent. factors for stage success. True, they are valuable assets, but they are not everything. \ The all-important essential is ability. \ That alone is the thing that counts. Many of the great actors and actresses whose names will live in theatrical annals were not renowned for good looks. Some of them, like Charlotte Cushman, Kean, Mansfield, were even plain, but they possessed what counts far more. They had the divine spark, the genius that disarms criticism and sweeps everything before it.

Youth has its value, certainly. It is only when we are young and full of enthusiasm that we can face difficulties which would quickly discourage older actors. In youth

## FOREWORD

the mind is fresh, one has all his strength, is pliable and easily moulded.

There is one thing the stage beginner need never fear. The profession is not so overcrowded that there is not always room for real talent. As a matter of fact, good actors to-day are hard to find. Managers need actors more than actors need managers. In preparing a play for the stage, the first requisite is to see that it is properly cast. And so important do I consider this part of the work that I have often spent a year in selecting a suitable company. It is then that the manager must call into service all his knowledge of human nature. He must study the author's meaning of a particular character as to appearance and temperament; he must find an actor who not only can look the part and think the part, but who, in addition, has a special and particular ability to give life to the author's



## FOREWORD

creation) Among the thousands of actors in New York there might be, perhaps, not more than one who could suit a particular rôle, and invariably he is a hard person to find when once he is wanted. Perhaps not even this one is to be found, in which case the manager must select an actor of temperament and intelligence sufficiently pliable to allow the author or stage manager to lead him along the right path, and to mould his abilities into proper form. I have spent months in looking for the right actor for a certain part, and then, when I have been about ready to give up in despair, have run across some unknown man playing a small part in an obscure company, and have felt instinctively that he was the very one I was after. These "finds," as a rule, turn out well, for such an actor feels that at last his opportunity has come, and he will work doubly hard to make the best of it.

## FOREWORD

Just such an opportunity may one day come to you and when you least expect it. Whether you will "make good" or not depends on how much and how well you have prepared yourself for the actor's calling. In this book you will learn what some of these qualifications are, but, above all, don't forget that there is one important asset no preparation and no school can give—personal magnetism. If you have not that, you are not fitted for the stage. With it, you may accomplish anything.

Some years ago I was asked by that very excellent chronicle of the stage and its people, the *Theatre Magazine*, to explain the method I followed in selecting my actors. What I said on that occasion I can well repeat here:

When I have a part in view and go about to the theatres to seek for some one to play it, I do not say, "He will do, because he

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walks thus or talks thus." The art of acting is not mathematical. It is not an exact science. We may not say in acting, "Two and two make four." When I have found the person I want to play the part, there is a passing of something from me to him, from him to me, and I know that I have found him, although I cannot say why. I send for him to come to see me. I talk with him as to a new friend. I draw him out. I persuade him to talk of himself, of his life, and while he does so I am studying him—studying his face to see what it discloses, and what it hides; studying his hands, his feet, his body, to gauge their possibilities of expression. There are no rules of physiognomy I follow. I can tell; that is all. As I talk with him I know whether his life has brutalized or refined him. I know whether he is sensitive or callous. I know whether he is keenly attuned to emotion, or

## FOREWORD

phlegmatic. I may listen to what he is saying or I may not. I am reading his life and character, not by the light of what he says, but by the disclosures of his features. So I gauge my actor while I am engaging him.

So in dealing with actors and actresses at rehearsal, I adapt myself to their temperaments. There are some persons who require a kind of bullying. You must storm, you must scold, or you will get nothing from them. If I know at the beginning of a rehearsal that I shall have to use such tactics to waken someone I say: "Now I am going to play that I am angry to-day, but don't mind. Only do what I say. The anger is play." We understand each other. When in the course of a rehearsal it becomes necessary for me to say, as I have said: "You walk across the stage like an elephant going to a snail's funeral," the actor knows that he must change that walk, yet he feels

## FOREWORD

none of the rancor that would interfere with the development of his part. On the contrary, if there is some sensitive, half-hysterical girl at fault, I should have to persuade her, to gently make her see that her walk is atrocious, without wounding her feelings. She has to be talked to as a lover talks to a woman he is wooing. I act all through rehearsals, but I always say: "Do this, but do not imitate me. Do it in your own way." If the way is a bad one, he must be led, not driven, into improving it.

X The first word, and the last, in acting is temperament. There must be heart, heart, heart. Soul is only a glow. The definite thing is the heart, the capacity to feel. Intelligence is desirable, but it is secondary. The merely brainy actor is never a great actor on the stage. The heart is greater than the brain.

*David Belasco*

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# TRAINING FOR THE STAGE

## THE PLAYER TO-DAY

“SEE the players well bestowed,” said Shakespeare, and after an interval of three hundred years the injunction has been literally obeyed. The conditions of the Elizabethan stage did not permit of any pampering of its mummers, but in our time it is different. To-day the player *is* well bestowed. There can be no question about that. The theatre has reached the most prosperous era in its history and the actor has prospered with it. No longer is he a social outcast. The stage is a recognized profession. Society no longer despises the actor, but greets him with open arms. In a time when money is an Open Sesame to

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every circle, the fashionable leading man, with an annual income equal to that of the President, no doubt considers himself entitled to as much consideration as a bespectacled scientist or bewhiskered college professor with only a beggarly \$10,000 a year. Every now and then the actor grumbles at his hereditary enemy, the manager, but taken all in all, to-day he is better paid, has more opportunities, and receives more attention from the public than ever before in the history of the drama. The newspapers and magazines are filled with his portraits and chronicle his slightest doings. From a "rogue and vagabond," which even to-day is his legal status under old English law, still unrepealed, the player has become one of fortune's favorites. He not only basks in beauty's smiles, but his princely revenue enables him to own a country seat and half a dozen automobiles. If reason-

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ably economical, he can retire at the age of fifty, his future secure.

If his histrionic skill and artistic ideals do not always measure up to those of the old-time actor, at least he can point to the healthy condition of his bank account. Where his prototype of a few decades ago was content to trudge home to a humble lodging after thrilling an audience with the power and beauty of his acting in such rôles as Richard III, Iago, Othello, Virginius, all impersonated during the same week, the fashionable matinee idol of to-day, after appearing in the one rôle he has acted for two consecutive seasons, finds a luxurious limousine awaiting him at the stage door and drives leisurely to supper at his club.

The actor of the old stock company days, rugged, intellectual, picturesque, quaint, filled with a fine sense of the dignity of his calling, careless in his attire, helpless as a

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child in business matters, happy go lucky, improvident, lovable, schooled in the best traditions of the stage, experienced in a wide range of parts, trained to assume equally well half a dozen different rôles almost in as many days, is fast disappearing. In his place has appeared a smart, dapper young man, well set up, well groomed, very practical. Among these are many possessing talent, brains and ambition, players of whom the contemporary stage has every reason to be proud. They have vigor, vitality, fine intelligence, added to great charm of personality. It is not their fault if present-day conditions are unfavorable to the full growth of their dramatic gifts. Playing drawing-room comedy season after season does not afford the right training to develop a Bernhardt or a Booth. There are others, however, among this new generation of players of whom as much cannot be said,

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actors who have no artistic ideals and few aspirations beyond self-exploitation and the securing of a large salary.

The average young actor of this type is frankly commercial. He knows little or nothing of the history or traditions of the theatre. He is not well read. He is more interested in the crease in his trousers and the color of his socks than in the social or intellectual questions of the hour. He has only the slightest acquaintance with Shakespeare and other stage classics. He is inclined to disdain and scoff at all such reading as "high-brow stuff," having little practical application to modern acting. With him the stage is a business. He regards it as one does real estate, plumbing, undertaking, or any other trade. He is in it to make money. Shirking study, having no real love for his profession, seeking in it only the opportunity it affords for easy,

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luxurious living—he is the product of the commercialized stage with scarcely a thought beyond securing a fat part in some production likely to run an entire season and so save him the onerous necessity of studying and rehearsing another rôle. When one contrasts with this the prodigious amount of study done by actors of another and less commercial era—Henry Irving impersonated no fewer than four hundred and twenty-eight characters during his first three years on the stage—one has food for reflection.

But, alas, we are no longer living in the times when great actors trod the boards, when Forrest, Macready, Kean, Booth illumined the stage with the fire of their genius. That type of actor has practically disappeared. The conditions that produced an actor like Irving have also changed. The theatre has deteriorated and the player has

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deteriorated with it. "What," asks William Winter in his delightful reminiscences,\* "are the causes that have produced this deplorable effect? The major causes are the prevalence of Materialism, infecting all branches of thought, and of Commercialism, infecting all branches of action. The public is not blameless, because public opinion and sentiment,—meaning the general condition and attitude of the public mind,—reacts upon those who address the public. The theatrical audience of this period is largely composed of vulgarians, who know nothing about art or literature and who care for nothing but the solace of their common tastes and animal appetites; on that point observation of the faces and manners of the multitude would satisfy any thoughtful observer; and, because the audience is largely of this character, the Theatre has become

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\* "Other Days," by William Winter.



## TRAINING FOR THE STAGE

precisely what it might have been expected to become when dependent on such patronage. It has passed from the hands that ought to control it,—the hands either of Actors who love and honor their art or of men endowed with the temperament of the actor and acquainted with his art and its needs,—and, almost entirely, it has fallen into the clutches of sordid, money-grubbing tradesmen, who have degraded it into a bazaar. Throughout the length and breadth of the United States speculators have captured the industry that they call ‘the Amusement Business’ and have made ‘a corner in Theatricals.’ A ‘department store’ administration of the Theatre, dispensing dramatic performances precisely as venders dispense vegetables, must, necessarily, vulgarize the vocation of the Actor, dispelling its glamour of romance and making it mechanical and common. In the old

## TRAINING FOR THE STAGE

theatrical days the Actor, no doubt, sometimes had reason to feel that, more or less, he was 'tolerated' by 'the gentry'; but that posture of folly he could despise. In the new theatrical day he knows that his art is peddled and, in the knowledge that he is treated as a commodity, there is a sense of humiliation that breeds indifference. Some of the acting now visible is, for that reason, about as interesting as the sawing of wood. . . ."

\ While the present day player is prosperous, with better pay, more luxurious theatres, more comfortable dressing rooms than were ever enjoyed by his predecessors, the conditions surrounding his life in most other respects are not improved. / The old stigma cast upon the actor, "rogue and vagabond," was probably not without some justification. The strolling mummers of Shakespeare's day, irresponsible, impe-

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cunious, rude, boisterous, were often, no doubt, a terror to peaceable citizens. In our day the actor behaves himself. Outwardly he comports himself as other men. But, to all intents and purposes, he is still a "strolling player." The exigencies of his peculiar calling do not permit of his having a fixed place of residence. He does not know the meaning of the word home. This, of course, does not include actors of established reputation, many of whom own beautiful homes in town or country. Such must be regarded as the lucky exceptions in considering the profession as a whole. The average actor, of necessity a wanderer, identified with no particular community, seldom, if ever, casts a vote and naturally takes little interest in politics or affairs of the country.\* Always on the go, belonging nowhere, he lives in a narrow little world of his own, quite sincere in his fatuous belief that "all the world's a

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\* See Appendix C.

## TRAINING FOR THE STAGE

stage ” and he the most popular player in it.

Most of his life he spends in hotels and on railroad trains. If, by happy chance, he is engaged for a successful Broadway production, the extent of the run is so uncertain that he cannot think of establishing himself permanently in a house or apartment. First, he has no furniture; second, he has no wife. Marriage, for most players, lies outside the range of practicability. Many actors are married—a few most happily—but what kind of connubial arrangement can it be where husband and wife are in different companies travelling on the road half the time? \ “ The actress has a right to as much domestic happiness as women in other walks of life,” said a well-known leading woman recently, “ does she always get it? No—the peculiar conditions of her calling make it almost impossible. When one stops to consider that two players, who are also hus-

## TRAINING FOR THE STAGE

band and wife, are appearing in two different companies, perhaps a thousand miles apart, is it a wonder that they never have a real opportunity to know each other thoroughly? To all intents and purposes they are strangers and remain so. They cannot possibly learn to understand each other as a married couple should. \ If they could become better acquainted we should hear of fewer stage divorces. The biggest reason of divorce among them is the forced separation from each other of four, five or six months at a time." \ Denial is often made that there are any more divorces among stage folk than among people in other walks of life. No statistics are at hand to prove this contention. \ The newspapers seem to be always chronicling the domestic troubles of actors, but it is fair to remember that there is not the white light focussed on women elsewhere that there is on the stage \

## TRAINING FOR THE STAGE

\ At best the player's life is an unwholesome, abnormal existence. He sleeps till mid-day, idles away his afternoons (when not rehearsing) and spends his nights in the overheated, feverish, artificial atmosphere of the theatre. Here he literally lives on his nerves. \ Harried by the exacting stage manager, criticised, if not made love to, by the temperamental star, flattered by jealous but tactful colleagues, his ear tickled nightly by the rich, rolling tones of his own voice and the applause that follows his exit—is it surprising that he sometimes loses his head? | The constant mental strain, the rush and excitement, the apprehension of forgetting his lines—a tragedy that all actors, even the most experienced, constantly fear—cannot fail to be a terrific strain. And then the lights! A physician recently expressed the opinion that the effect of so much electric voltage concentrated on an actor while on

## TRAINING FOR THE STAGE

the stage cannot fail to have a shattering effect on his nervous system. Most of the evening, while off stage, he spends in a small, ill-ventilated dressing room which he has to share with two or three others. That is the only place where he can be unless he prefers to stand in the draughty wings. In times gone by actors had a Green Room, or place for general assembly while awaiting their cues. Commercialism long ago abolished this interesting and agreeable feature. The late Richard Mansfield tried to bring it into vogue again at the Garrick, but without success.

| In view of these abnormal and disturbing conditions it is hardly to be wondered at if the average actor has not the same outlook on life as most other men. His perspective, generally, is all out of focus. He holds the mirror up to nature and sees in it only the reflection of himself. His environ-

## TRAINING FOR THE STAGE

ments tend to make him egotistical, vain, and extravagant. A foolish public makes much of him, exaggerating his importance out of all proportion to his actual merit, praising his personal appearance, extolling his talents, until he is encouraged to think himself a very wonderful fellow. Ask the average actor when you happen to meet him casually what the news is, and nine times out of ten he will reply: "I played Newark last week. Next week we jump to Baltimore." He will not go on to explain that he is appearing in such and such a play. It is inconceivable to his vanity that you should not know. He imagines himself a person of such consequence that the whole world eagerly watches his movements. In France they call an actor a *M'as-tu-vu*, which, anglicised, means a *Have-you-seen-me*. This may be taken as some indication of the depths of egotism to which some players sink.



## TRAINING FOR THE STAGE

Yet if the player, in common with all mortals, has his shortcomings, his little foibles and vanities, he has also good qualities that have endeared him to the public, which, not without reason, regards him much as an overgrown child, not altogether responsible for his actions. His faults, such as they are, being chiefly the result of his artistic temperament and his artificial environment, he is to be pitied rather than blamed. Ever an optimist, viewing life through roseate spectacles, he is quite unprepared to meet difficulties when they come. Blaming the managers and never his own limitations for such troubles as befall him he is likely to collapse completely at the first serious check to his ambition. Swayed entirely by impulse and emotion, his nerves always keyed up to the highest pitch, one moment he is raised to the skies, the next instant plunged to the depths. Generous

## TRAINING FOR THE STAGE

he is conceded to be and ever ready to lend his services when call is made upon him in the cause of charity or distress. Instances of almost superhuman unselfishness and self-sacrifice by players are written in the Golden Book, where good deeds are recorded. Actresses, particularly, are big hearted and sympathetic. The supreme ambition of every player is to make a hit on Broadway, yet one actress I could name actually resigned her part in an important metropolitan production so that another actress, whose mother was slowly dying in New York, might have it. She incurred the displeasure of her manager in so doing, and for a long time afterward was exiled to the "road" in consequence. Possibly the publicity given a big Broadway benefit might have something to do with the player's being willing to volunteer his services, but the spirit that prompts a star, weary after

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a season's arduous work, to appear in the slums at a benefit for some obscure Crippled Children's Home is surely above suspicion.

1 Socially, the player finds himself in a somewhat narrow field. Content to move in his own little world, he is rarely tempted to go out of it. Society no longer frowns upon him, it is true, and if given the slightest encouragement, invitations to dinner and dances would doubtless shower upon him; but the actor has little time, even had he the inclination, to cultivate Society. | He prefers for his hours of diversion the more congenial atmosphere of the actors' club, where he can listen to endless shoptalk and meet men of his own craft. The Players, in Gramercy Park, New York, is the most aristocratic of the actors' clubs. The gift of Edwin Booth, it was organized under the personal supervision of that great actor and even to-day his gentle spirit seems to pervade the



Byron, N. Y.  
RECEPTION ROOM OF THE PLAYERS' CLUB, GRAMERCY PARK, NEW YORK, SHOWING THE PORTRAIT OF EDWIN BOOTH,  
THE FOUNDER, OVER THE MANTEL.



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artistic, luxurious interior. Here one meets the aristocrats of the profession and on Christmas night, when mirth and good fellowship reign in the usually sedate halls and dining room, a hush comes over the actors as the president rises and proposes a toast to Edwin Booth, which is drunk in reverent silence. The Lambs, less exclusive and more popular, is second in importance among the actors' clubs. Conceived in a spirit of fun, the Lambs has grown year by year until to-day it is one of the best known and most popular clubs in the country. Each year its frolicsome members hold a public "gambol"—a theatrical performance in which the most prominent actors take part and which earns a substantial sum for the club's treasury. The Friars, a more recent organization, started a few years ago by a group of theatrical press representatives and managers, is also

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an important factor in theatrical club life.

The actresses, too, have their clubs and social organizations. First among them must be mentioned the Professional Woman's League, started some twenty years ago by Mrs. A. M. Palmer, wife of the late well-known manager. The League, located centrally at 1999 Broadway, looks after its members' business interests, gives them legal advice and holds monthly socials. It has also a professional wardrobe from which members may rent or borrow on promises of payment from the first week's salary. The Twelfth Night Club, organized by a group of the younger set of actresses, makes more of the social side of actresses' life than the business end. During the season the club holds monthly receptions with some prominent male star as guest of honor—and its membership includes practically all the leading women of

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the stage. Another and similar organization, known as the Charlotte Cushman Club, is situated in Philadelphia. Miss Mary Shaw first conceived the idea of this club as "the first link of a number of such clubs stretching across the entire continent, so that young actresses 'on the road' may avoid hotel life and gain atmosphere of home." Other and newer clubs for actresses in New York are the Rehearsal Club and the Gamut Club.

The world will always wish the player well. Willingly it overlooks his shortcomings and pardons his little vanities. When one recalls the pleasure the actor gives, making us forget our troubles, exciting our laughter, stirring our deeper and nobler emotions, are we not conscious of a debt of gratitude that always remains unpaid? For, after all, what is left when the player has strutted his little hour and the final curtain



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has rung down? The sculptor, the author, the composer, the architect have created something tangible which they leave for future generations to admire. But the play-actor, the power and charm of whose acting has held thousands spell-bound, has nothing to leave but memories that fade, alas, all too soon. How many among the new generation of theatregoers remember the exquisite humor of Jefferson's *Bob Acres*, the nobility and dignity of Edwin Booth's *Hamlet*, the majesty of Forrest's *Lear*? To-day these past glories of the American stage are names—nothing more.

### THE ART OF THE ACTOR

A FOOL cannot be an actor, though an actor may act a fool's part, observed Sophocles sagely two thousand years ago. What the Athenian dramatist said is still true, but perhaps less true now than in the

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classic age when on the boards strode actors of heroic stature, noble in mien, voice, and gesture, trained to declaim with lofty eloquence the poet's mighty verse. To-day the tragedian's once splendid art is lightly dismissed as old style, its gifted exponents are disappearing one after the other, and in a profession which practically raises no barriers to inexperience and incompetence, where every greenhorn deems himself worthy to wear the cothurnus, it is inevitable that there must be some fools.

The actor's art has no definite laws. "The end of all acting," said Henry Irving, "is 'to hold the mirror up to Nature.' Different actors have different methods, but that is their common purpose which can be accomplished only by the closest study and observation. Acting, like every other art, has a mechanism. No painter, however great his imaginative power, can suc-

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ceed in pure ignorance of the technicalities of his art; and no actor can make much progress till he has mastered a certain mechanism which is within the scope of patient intelligence. Beyond that is the sphere in which a magnetic personality exercises a power of sympathy which is irresistible and indefinable. That is great acting, but though it is inborn and cannot be taught, it can be brought forth only when the actor is master of the methods of his craft."

If, as Irving suggests, acting consists in holding "the mirror up to nature," the ways of doing it must necessarily be varied a millionfold to fit all the types and moods one finds in nature. It would, perhaps, be impossible, in this regard, to improve upon Hamlet's instructions to the players:

"Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of our players

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do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious, periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows, and noise. I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod. Pray you, avoid it. Be not too tame neither; but let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action: with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at

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the first, and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form, and pressure. Now this, overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one must, in your allowance, o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players, that I have seen play,—and heard others praise, and that highly,—not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably. . . . And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them, that will themselves laugh, to set on

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some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the mean time, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered. That's villanous; and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it."

The present day actor probably labors under no delusions concerning his "art." It is even doubtful if he still ranks himself as an artist. In these days when success on the stage, as elsewhere, is gauged solely by the money standard, the best actor is he who can command the most money. Yet he is far from being a fool. Although the matinee idol, impeccably tailored, with his name looming so large on the playbill as to quite eclipse that of the modest author of the piece, he is quite aware of his limitations. He knows that as an impersonator of character, and portrayer of the human passions, he does not come up to the standard set by

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the great players of the past, but he retorts, very logically, that times have changed, that public taste has changed, and that, as a natural consequence, the actor has changed with them. It is quite true that nowadays the public and the theatre managers do not seek actors so much as they seek "types" and personalities. "There is no question," said Daniel Frohman, the well-known manager, recently, "about the public's appreciation and enjoyment of Shakespeare's plays. The whole trouble lies in the inability of a manager to find actors who are capable of presenting Shakespearean plays as they ought to be presented. Actors to-day do not have the training they need for Shakespeare. A man or woman is successful in a certain type of rôle and becomes a box office asset in that sort of part. Take John Drew, for example. The public expects to see him in a polite drawing room comedy and

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would accept him in nothing else. It was considered almost revolutionary this year when he made his entrance in *The Chief* with a wide gash in the knee of his trousers! There's a man doomed to a frock coat forever! And it's the same thing with almost all the players now on the American stage. If they start as a cockney servant or a French count, a detective, or an adventuress they play that sort of part until the end of their stage career."

Mr. Frohman blames the system, but he seems to forget that it is the theatre managers themselves who have brought it about. When engaging an actor, they do not ask can he act the part, but will he look the part, and instead of insisting on an actor getting under the skin of the person he is supposed to be impersonating and submerging his identity completely in that of the assumed character, which, after all, is the very



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essence of the art of acting, they encourage him to play himself, and to that end exploit the actor's or actress's own individuality, with the result that no matter what the play, no matter how different the character, that actor is always seen *prima facie* as himself. He seldom employs make-up in the true sense—that of altering his personal appearance. Apparently every character he impersonates has the same face, the same way of combing his hair, etc. Frequently he does not even take the trouble to change his clothes. The illusion from the standpoint of the audience is, in consequence, seriously impaired, if not completely destroyed. The spectator does not see the character created by the dramatist. All he sees before him is the popular leading man, with whose physiognomy and peculiar little mannerisms he is as familiar as with those of a member of his own family. “Another aspect of our

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art which has of late been much debated," says Sir Herbert Tree,\* the distinguished English actor-manager, "is whether it is desirable that the actor should or should not sink his individuality in the part he is playing; whether, in fact, the actor should be absorbed in his work, or the work be absorbed in the actor. It seems to me, in spite of all that certain writers are never tired of dinning into our ears, that the higher aim of the artist is so to project his imagination into the character he is playing that his own individuality becomes merged in his assumption. . . . I remember that when I first went upon the stage I was told that to obtain any popular success an actor must be always himself, that the public even likes to recognize the familiar voice before he appears on the scene, that he should, if possible, confine

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\* "Thoughts and After Thoughts," by Herbert Beerbohm Tree.

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himself to what was called 'one line of business,' and that he should seek to cultivate a certain mannerism which should be the badge of his individuality. Surely this is an entirely erroneous and mischievous doctrine!"

Of late years this exploitation of the personality of the actor has grown to huge dimensions, and the pernicious practice has resulted in the equally pernicious and preposterous starring system, whereby an actor or actress, if their respective faces and personalities happen to please the public—ability being only a secondary consideration—are suddenly promoted over night to positions of consequence once only held by players of genius.

An actor of marked individuality and originality is often mistaken for an actor of uncommon ability. Perhaps he is impersonating a "drummer" in a comedy of Amer-

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ican business life. We are delighted with the characterization which has all the "freshness," humor, forcefulness of the typical travelling salesman of real life. We immediately jump to the conclusion that the actor impersonating the rôle is a wonderful actor. The glad tidings spread like wild-fire, and the astonished thespian becomes famous overnight. Managers fall over each other to star him. The truth is he is not an actor at all. He has simply been impersonating himself, and as "way back home" he was just the same type of man conceived by the author, living in the same surroundings, associating with the same commercial class; he had no difficulty at all in giving verisimilitude to his performance on the stage. If that same actor were asked to play a duke, or personage of consequence, with whose deportment and manners he was not so familiar, it is more than probable that he would

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fail lamentably to convey the impression of truth, and be laughed off the stage. In other words: as the drummer he was not acting, but only appearing as himself; as the duke he would be acting, and would prove he could not act.

It is not, perhaps, so much the fault of the present-day actor that he fails to measure up to the standard of such players as Booth, Forrest, or the elder Kean, as it is that of managers, public, playwrights. It is difficult to know where properly to place the blame. The managers pretend that the public has no taste for Shakespeare or blank verse drama of any kind and refuses to patronize it; the public retorts that it is never afforded an opportunity to show its appreciation, while the playwright declares that anything other than smartly written society comedy, or sensational melodrama, has no chance of being even considered by

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the manager, and there you have it. If it were the fashion nowadays to play Shakespeare, *The School for Scandal*, *Richelieu*, *Virgilius*, etc., there is little doubt that the actor would improve in his art. Of necessity he would have to equip himself for such rôles. Studies now utterly neglected would become indispensable parts of his training. Above all, he would have to pay more attention to elocution, which now he neglects abominably—inarticulation is the besetting sin of our present-day stage—and once more he would learn to submerge his identity under “make-up” and costume. But the highest form of drama is not written to-day. The playwright has lost the art of it. Public and managers seem not to want it. Can the actor be blamed if inspiration is lacking?

It is indeed a question if the present generation of theatregoers knows what good acting is. How should they? They have

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nothing by which to compare performances. Even in England as far back as half a century ago this growing lack of artistic acumen among theatregoers was noted. In a letter to Anthony Trollope, George Henry Lewes deplores the ignorance of the average audience in these matters. "To effect a revival of the once splendid art of the actor," he writes, "there must be not only accomplished artists and an eager public; there must be a more enlightened public. The critical pit, filled with playgoers who were familiar with fine acting and had trained judgment, has disappeared. In its place there is a mass of amusement seekers, not without a nucleus of intelligent spectators but of this nucleus only a small minority has accurate ideas of what constitutes good art."

Formerly it was very different. In the "palmy days" of the drama every playgoer was a self-constituted critic. Familiar from

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early youth with the plays presented he was quite competent to compare the acting of one player with another in the same part. That is one reason why good acting was so appreciated, why the galleries went wild over Macready, Cushman, and Booth. The audiences were familiar with the points to be made in the play, understood the difficulties of the rôle, just as a pianist is able to enjoy a concert more than one who does not know music. To-day, the theatregoer goes to see a play with which he is unfamiliar. He has no idea of the relative value of each rôle or how they should be played. This alone tends to the deterioration of present-day acting, for the actor, not compelled to live up to tradition, feeling that his work will not be measured by the achievements of a favorite predecessor, has no real incentive, apart from a natural desire to do well, to make any extraordinary effort.



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\* Personality counts for much on the stage, but hard work and careful training are the chief stepping stones to success. "People generally overrate a fine actor's genius," says George Henry Lewes,\* "and under-rate his trained skill. They are apt to credit him with a power of intellectual conception and poetic creation to which he has really a very slight claim, and fail to recognize all the difficulties which his artistic training has enabled him to master."

Speaking of Edmund Kean, "incomparably the greatest actor I have ever seen," the critic goes on to say: "He was an actor of such splendid endowments in the highest departments of the art, that no one in our day can be named of equal rank, unless it be Rachel, who was as a woman what he was as a man. The irregular

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\* "On Actors and the Art of Acting," by George Henry Lewes.



Byron, N. Y.

WILLIAM SEYMOUR, STAGE DIRECTOR, CONSULTING WITH JULIA MARLOWE



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splendor of his power was felicitously characterized in the saying of Coleridge that 'seeing Kean act was reading Shakespeare by flashes of lightning,' so brilliant and so startling were the sudden illuminations, and so marking the dull intervals. Critics who had formed their ideal on the Kemble school were shocked at Kean's want of dignity and at his fitful elocution, sometimes thrillingly effective, at other times deplorably tame and careless. In their angry protests they went so far as to declare him 'a mere mountebank.' Not so thought the pit. He stirred the general heart with such a rush of mighty power, impressed himself so vividly by accent, look, and gesture that it was as vain to protest against his defects as it was for French critics to insist upon Shakespeare's want of *bienséance* and *bon goût*. . . . He was an artist, and in Art all effects are regulated. The orig-

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inal suggestion may be, and generally is, sudden and unprepared, 'inspired,' as we say, but the alert intellect recognizes its truth, seizes on it, regulates it. Without nice calculation no proportion could be preserved; we would have a work of fitful impulse, not a work of enduring Art. Kean vigilantly and patiently rehearsed every detail, trying the tones until his ear was satisfied, practising looks and gestures until his artistic sense was satisfied, and having once regulated these he never changed them. The consequence was that, when he was sufficiently sober to stand and speak, he could act his part with the precision of a singer who has thoroughly learned his air. One who often acted with him informed me that when Kean was rehearsing on a new stage he accurately counted the number of steps he had to take before reaching a certain spot or before uttering a certain word; these steps were

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justly regarded by him as part of the mechanism which could no more be neglected than the accompaniment to an air could be neglected by a singer. Hence it was that he was always the same; not always in the same health, not always in the same vigor, but always master of the part and expressing it through the same symbols."

On the much discussed question as to whether an actor should himself feel the emotion he portrays, opinions differ. Diderot,\* the French philosopher who laid down the principles of a new drama of real life in opposition to the stilted conventions of the classic stage, holds that for good acting there must be no real feeling on the part of the actor. "Extreme sensibility," he says, "makes middling actors; middling sensibility makes the ruck of bad actors; in complete absence of sensibility is the possibility of a sublime actor."

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\* "Paradoxe sur le Comédien," by Denis Diderot.

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Talma,\* Napoleon's favorite tragedian, held the opposite view. "To form a great actor," he says, "the union of sensibility and intelligence is required."

Henry Irving† also believed that good acting necessitated a player's feeling emotion to some extent. "I do not recommend actors," he says, "to allow their feelings to carry them away . . . but it is necessary to warn you against the theory, expounded with brilliant ingenuity by Diderot, that the actor never feels. . . . Has not the actor who can make his feelings a part of his art an advantage over the actor who never feels, but makes his observations solely from the feelings of others? *It is necessary to this art that the mind should have, as it were, a double consciousness, in which all the*

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\* "Réflexions sur l'Art Théâtral," by François Joseph Talma.

† "Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving," by Bram Stoker.

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*emotions proper to the occasion may have full swing, while the actor is all the time on the alert for every detail of his method.*✕

. . . The actor who combines the electric force of a strong personality with a mastery of the resources of his art, must have a greater power over his audiences than the passionless actor who gives a most artistic simulation of the emotions he never experiences."

✕ The elder Coquelin,\* on the other hand, agrees with Diderot. ✕ "I am convinced," he says, ✕ "that one can only be a great actor on conditions of complete self-mastery and ability to express feelings which are not experienced, which may never be experienced, which from the very nature of things never can be experienced. And this is the reason that our trade is an art and this is the cause of our ability to create!" ✕ The same faculty

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\* "Art and the Actor," by Constant Coquelin.



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which permits the dramatic poet to bring forth from his brain a Tartuffe or a Macbeth, armed and equipped, although he, the poet, be a thoroughly upright and honest man, permits the actor to assimilate this character, to dissect and analyze it at will, without ceasing to be for an instant distinctly himself, as separate a thing as the painter and his canvas."

### THE STAGE AS A CAREER FOR WOMEN

**A**LMOST every young girl has been stage-struck at some time or other and fired with the ambition to enter upon the theatrical career. Caught by the glamour of the foot-lights, she thinks she would like to be an actress because it looks easy. The mysterious, fascinating puppet world, peopled with the interesting characters of the playwright's brain, appeals irresistibly to her imagination. She already sees herself playing

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Juliet, Desdemona, Rosalind, wearing royal robes, attended by pages and maids of honor and made fervent love to by impassioned Romeos. She gives free rein to her fancy, when suddenly her enthusiasm receives a chill. ~~Some~~ Some kind friend exclaims: "Going on the stage? You're mad. No girl can go on the stage and retain her self-respect." Mother and father instantly take alarm and forthwith all dramatic aspirations are squashed.

Is it true that conditions behind the foot-lights are any worse than in other careers for women? ~~It~~ It is difficult, if not impossible, to express an opinion on this frequently discussed and very delicate subject. Only those who have trodden the boards and been bred, so to speak, in the atmosphere of the stage, only those who have encountered such perils and overcome them, are competent to speak with authority. ~~Even~~ Even the players

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themselves are divided on the question. One well-known actress said that if she had a younger sister the stage was the last place in the world she would allow her to be. Other players contend that conditions back of the curtain are no worse than in other careers for women—perhaps not so bad.

The assertion that the companionship of actors is dangerous to the actress is not based upon fact. If a girl behaves in a ladylike manner, is serious and attends only to the work in hand, no actor is likely to annoy her. On the contrary, the chivalry inherent in every man will usually prompt him to protect and assist her. There is a delightful *camaraderie* among players of both sexes that is perfectly wholesome.

Some think that the handsome leading man, who charms the audience with his fascinating personality, exerts the same influence over the actress with whom he is play-

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ing, and many see in this alone a grave danger to the susceptible young girl. The truth is that the actress views the actor in a light quite different from the audience. She sees him with his grease paint on, she knows he is only acting, she is too close not to see all the tricks of his trade. It is a well-known fact that the actress, instead of admiring her fellow-player, is almost always quite indifferent to him. The spectator is also apt to believe that the love scenes so realistically acted in the full glare of the footlights are likely to be continued after the curtain has fallen. Nothing could be further from the truth. While the love scene is in progress it is possible that the players may actually feel the emotion they are portraying, but directly it is over, and the curtain has fallen, the spell is completely broken.

Others disapprove of the propinquity of the stage. They are scandalized at the close

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quarters of players behind the scenes. It is true that there are serious objections to the present dressing-room system. The quarters provided by the average theatre are totally inadequate. "There is scarcely a theatre in the United States," says William Winter,\* "that contains a sufficient number of dressing rooms to accommodate a reasonably numerous theatrical company. Each performer should have a separate dressing room: that is a matter of imperative necessity as well as of decency: yet, in many of the theatres, two, three, or four persons, usually nervous and sometimes uncongenial, must occupy one small room, and in that room must prepare themselves for a performance,—under circumstances that make the essential composure impossible."

\*That the conditions surrounding the actress do not expose her to temptations and

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\* "Other Days," by William Winter.

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influences that go to the undermining of moral character could not, I think, be successfully maintained. It is also possible that these temptations are more numerous and harder to resist than those encountered by women in other walks of life. The business and professional woman is, or should be, safe at home once the working day is ended. With the actress the day is never ended. She is up all hours and her work does not begin until other women are almost ready for bed. Logically, these late hours should be bad for health, yet statistics do not show that the actress is any less healthy than other women. On the contrary, her busy life and mental activity seem to make her immune from the ills, imaginary or otherwise, from which most women suffer.\* It is a well-known fact that actresses, often exposed in low-necked dresses to violent and unavoidable draughts on the stage, seldom catch

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cold. A physician accounted for this by explaining that the effect of the chill on the body was neutralized by the excitement and mental stimulus of acting.

✂The real danger or safety of the actress lies within herself and in her own attitude towards life. If she is without strength of character, she is likely to lose her balance very quickly. Because of her public character she is flattered and paid more attention than any other woman, and her vanity soon runs away with her. ✂ She loses all sense of proportion. She is too silly to realize that her acting does not merit the praise her manager bestows upon her, and she is quite ready to believe that it is her remarkable ability that leads to her name being featured in big electric letters on Broadway. Later, when her good looks have faded, there may be another story. There is the real danger. Only weak, foolish girls are likely to suc-

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cumb to it, those who love clothes, automobiles, and luxury, and shrink from hard work and the long years of waiting that a different and more respectable course of living entails.

✍ The woman of intelligence soon learns that the only success worth while is honestly won and that real happiness is attained only by the straight and narrow path. For the beginner it is a very hard road, strewn with seemingly unsurmountable obstacles, and the outlook is often discouraging if not disheartening. Only the few can hope to reach the top of the professional ladder. The vast majority of players must be content to remain the hewers of wood and drawers of water, and as the salaries paid the rank and file are small, and employment precarious, the outlook for any but the most brilliantly endowed is doubtful and uncertain indeed ✍

✍ Travelling "on the road," particularly, is



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trying to the young actress. In New York where, perhaps, she has relatives and friends, her situation is not so bad. She is able to save a little money from her salary and her expenses are not formidable. On the road it is different. Her means not permitting her to patronize the best hotels, she is forced to take a room in cheap boarding houses, and only those who have survived these institutions know what they are! Playing one or two night stands, always on the jump, practically living on trains, exposed to all kinds of weather, eating poor food, getting no sleep, the life is far from roseate. Only the courage and unquenchable enthusiasm of youth and a superabundance of devotion to ambition renders it endurable, and the delicately nurtured girl may well pause and think twice before she goes into it. In this respect, theatrical conditions are very much the same in England as they are here.

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Charles Brookfield, the English comedian, in his amusing "Reminiscences," dwells particularly on this pathetic feature of theatrical touring, and speaks of the number of wistful girls one finds wandering here and there about the country:

"There must be hundreds of them wandering about the country from one small town to another, nearly all of them pretty and amiable and well-mannered, who have to keep up a certain amount of appearance on tiny, irregular salaries, and save enough to keep them during the months they are out of engagement. As far as I could ever see, they live mostly on bread-and-butter and tea. They never complain—at least, never about anything serious, only now and then about some little professional slight. They travel long night journeys with no further toilet luxury than a cherished old powder-puff—almost bald from faithful service—

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jealously guarded in a corner of a shabby little purse. They are always ready, and even eager, to study long parts at a few hours' notice. The only glimmer of light in each poor girl's life is, I fear, a spark of hope twinkling ahead of her, as she lies staring into the night, that one day a manager will chance to be passing through Barmby-on-the-Marsh, will see her play Pauline, and carry her off to fame and fortune. But she never catches her will-o'-the-wisp."

Many a girl, discouraged in her first attempts to get on the legitimate stage by repeated rebuffs from the dramatic agents, whose laconic and stereotyped "nothing to-day" ends by getting on her nerves, is tempted to try the chorus in some musical comedy production. At first the idea shocks her. From time immemorial every possible wickedness and sin has been laid at

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the door of the chorus! Yet she recalls that several actresses, to-day famous, began in the chorus. No special qualifications are necessary. Even the voice is not important in the chorus nowadays. Good looks and a shapely figure alone are required. The salary averages \$25 a week and there is always employment to be had. The idea at once appeals to her. It means an immediate income and just what she is seeking—stage experience. She gets the experience, no doubt about that, but it is not always of the kind she sought. In the chorus, as elsewhere, if a girl is serious and of strong character she can get along without harm. No one will interfere with her, and if she attends to her work and possesses any talent at all, it is hardly likely that the alert-eyed stage manager will let such good material go to waste long. Her opportunity will come and quick promotion will follow. This is the

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bright side of the chorus question. The reverse side is less attractive. One serious objection to the chorus is that the girls are of necessity thrown closely together. There are black sheep in every flock and unfortunately one frivolous girl is apt to corrupt all her associates. Anxious to make friends with her new companions the newcomer does not like to refuse the proffered cocktail, and she often finds herself forcing a laugh at some suggestive joke she does not even understand. One can hardly look for exemplary manners or strict moral code in the dressing rooms of the chorus, and in such an atmosphere it is inevitable that only the strongest characters can emerge unscathed. The weak, frivolous girl at once succumbs. She starts to drink and dissipate, there are after-theatre suppers and gay joy rides "after the show," and the result is moral disaster, complete and irrevocable. On the

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authority of Mr. Flo Ziegfeld,\* one of the biggest employers of chorus girls in the world, three short years is about the limit of the life of such a girl. At the end of that time, ruined in health, her beauty gone, she disappears, swallowed up in the vortex of the great city. That is why in the profession the chorus is known as the graveyard of the stage.]

Joseph Jefferson, the famous creator of *Rip Van Winkle*, was once asked his opinion of the stage as a career for women. "This is an oft repeated question not easily answered," he said. "I cannot but be prejudiced in my reply, for I am already four generations deep in the dramatic profession. My great-grandfather, my grandfather and grandmother, my father and mother were all actors and actresses, and in the face of this

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\* Interview in the *Theatre Magazine*, November, 1915.

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it is not likely I should say anything against my calling. I dislike to defend my own profession. I would much rather some minister should do it while I defend his. My daughters never showed any talent for the stage, but if they had they would have acted side by side with their father. | Whether a woman should go on the stage depends entirely upon her motive. If she wishes to go on for amusement or to gratify her vanity I emphatically answer 'No,' but if she wishes to earn a living or adopt the stage because she has love and real talents for it I say 'Yes.' | And the public should not be deprived of such. I do not claim entire virtue and purity for the stage—no profession can claim that, for they are all made up of humanity, good and bad—but I am proud to number among my friends a host of men and women in the profession who are, I know, among the finest people in the land.

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It depends upon the woman herself in any calling whether her life is respectable or not.”

Annie Russell, an actress whose private life has always been beyond reproach, champions warmly the woman of the stage. She says: “The old-time impression that a woman who adopts a stage career imperils her moral welfare is probably pretty well outgrown. The woman who goes on the stage is concerned with her ideals of art. Also, she has a great deal of hard work to do. The same pitfalls and snares that surround women are found everywhere. They are not confined to the theatre. I have found that there is more immorality in business houses with which I deal than in all the play-houses of this country. Of course, a girl who goes on the stage is not protected by home influences. Her career depends entirely upon the kind of head she has on her



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shoulders. I have been on the stage all my life—ever since I was seven years old. I have never left it except for illness, and I have always found there the best protectors and advisers. All through my life the best men and women I have known I have met on the stage. They have had the most sympathy and understanding and knowledge of human nature. There are a great number of women loud in their manner and in their dress who are connected in some way with the stage. They, however, are not the thousands of honest, hardworking women who are really actresses, who really have the right to be called actresses. In all my companies, whenever there has been a person who didn't behave well, that person was simply snubbed by the rest of the company. And the chances are that such a person will be sent away. If it is some silly girl who is acting foolishly she is usually protected and advised



Byron, N. Y.  
AN AUTHOR (CLYDE FITCH) READING HIS PLAY TO THE COMPANY—VIOLET ALLEN AND OTHERS



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by some of the women in the company."

"The stage," says Maxine Elliott,\* "offers bigger prizes to a woman than any other profession, and for those lucky enough to gain the prizes, life presents a broader horizon and many of the agreeable perquisites of success. But, oh, you stage-struck girls! If you saw a dozen people struggling in the water, and realized that only one or two could possibly escape drowning, your instinct would be just as ours is—to warn others against jumping in.] That is why we shout, 'Don't! Don't!' in the hope that it may save somebody from drowning.] Of course, the warning will never deter the girl who is destined for success. That is not the stuff she must be made of. But one feels the consciousness of duty performed in shouting out the danger.] Why go on the

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\* Signed article in the *Theatre Magazine*, August, 1908.

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stage if you have pleasant surroundings and a happy home life. You must give it all up for an extremely uncertain victory that is years and years ahead. Your life will be full of small humiliations and hardships and disappointments, the recurring uncertainty each year of what the next season will bring forth in the way of an engagement, the isolation of life on the road, the inescapable discomfort of travel, of being away from home and friends, and all that makes for your happiness. You will have years of poverty and loneliness and obscurity. If, however, you are not of the lucky ones with the happy home, if poverty pinches and you must work to live, then, of course, the situation changes. Try the stage, but be sure it is your vocation. You must have serious ambition and reasonable qualifications—the constitution of a horse, the skin of a rhinoceros, and that which is perhaps the best

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definition of genius—an infinite capacity for taking pains. If at the end you see the light, perhaps it is worth it all.”

### WHAT AN ACTOR EARNS

MANY young people, trying to determine upon a career, are attracted to the stage by reports of enormous salaries paid. They hear of huge sums earned by Maude Adams, who, for years, has enjoyed an income considerably over \$60,000; they read about David Warfield receiving \$200,000 from a single season of *The Music Master* and about John Drew, whose earnings average \$50,000 per annum. In most statements of players' earnings generous allowance must be made for the exaggeration of enthusiastic press agents, but in the above instances the sums mentioned are believed to be correct. Of course, these are three of the most important stars on the American stage, and as

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the amounts they receive represent an interest in the box office receipts in addition to a regular salary or guarantee, one must not take their particular earnings as examples when discussing present day stage salaries, although it is said that Grace George was paid a salary of \$1200 a week during the New York run of *The Truth*. As a matter of fact, theatrical salaries are not paid on any fixed basis. There is no uniform scale. When an actor is in great vogue, the competition is keen among managers to secure his services. Such an actor or actress demands and receives more than another player in the same line of work. ] We cannot, therefore, deal here with stars' incomes, or the salaries of the most popular players, but with the average.

The average leading man in a Broadway production to-day commands a salary of \$250 a week. This may reach a consider-

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ably higher figure according to the local demand for a particular player's services. A manager will often pay an actor more than he is actually worth to prevent some rival manager securing his services. For instance, one well-known young actor receives \$600 a week for a thin, inconsequential part that, under other circumstances, would be well paid at \$200. His leading woman gets \$500 for the same reason. But these are exceptions. The leading woman gets \$300 because she is expected to pay for expensive gowns. (The usual practice in regard to this is that the manager pays for the gowns if the play runs less than six weeks and the actress pays for them if the play runs over that period. The gown question is a very serious one for the actress to consider, and, as each leading woman tries to outshine the other in the beauty and costliness of her attire, there is no telling where



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the present extravagance will stop. Some figures in regard to the cost of some of the gowns seen in recent metropolitan productions are instructive:

The gowns worn in *The Great Lover*, by Virginia Fox Brooks, who plays the part of Edith Warren, were made by famous Fifth Avenue concerns. The three dresses, together with the hats and shoes, cost \$1500, all of which the actress pays out of her salary. The gown worn by Jane Cowl in the last act of *Common Clay* alone cost \$500. In *Fair and Warmer*, Madge Kennedy, who plays Blanche, wears a gown that is comparatively inexpensive—a mere bagatelle of \$250 for a simple little white dress. The gown worn by Julia Arthur in *The Eternal Magdalene* cost \$335. These few examples afford some idea what a “Broadway production” means in the matter of expense to the actress.

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The services of the heavy man (*i.e.*, the villain) are compensated at (\$200) a week and the adventuress gets the same. The leading juvenile is paid (\$150) and the ingénue receives \$125. The eccentric character man or woman gets about \$125. The utility people, that is the maids and butlers who bring in the afternoon tea or announce, "My Lord, the carriage waits," receive anywhere from (\$40 each.) It must not be forgotten, however, that these fees are for Broadway productions, for which the actor receives the largest salaries paid on the stage. When a Broadway production takes to "the road," these salaries are supposed to be slightly increased, owing to the actors' being under heavier expenses when traveling, but as a matter of fact, they are often decreased, because only the best so-called Broadway attractions when on tour retain the original New York cast. For reasons

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of economy, the expensive original cast, with the exception of the principals whose names serve to boom the show, are replaced by cheaper people. [In the prominent stock companies—even in those of the better class—the salaries are considerably lower,] ranging from \$150 a week—a high average—for “leads,” to as low as \$35 to \$40 a week for utility rôles. In the second and third rate “road” companies, playing melodrama in one-night stands, the rate is about \$75 a week for leading man, \$50 a week for leading woman and so down.

[Only very few players, comparatively, ever reach the coveted goal of their ambition—an appearance on Broadway. Actors of minor ability, or without influence or luck or whatever else it may be termed, have to be content all their lives with “stock” work in obscure provincial theatres, or travelling with crude melodrama “on the road.”] Of

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late, the moving picture has afforded the actor a lucrative field for his talents. Whatever may be said against the screen drama as a menace to the legitimate stage and destroyer of public taste, none can deny that it has come as manna from Heaven to the needy player.)

At first glance the Broadway salaries seem large when contrasted with those paid in other vocations, but it must be remembered that they are paid only during the life of the play. For instance, a play may close in two weeks. The leading man therefore would receive only \$500 for about five weeks' work (including rehearsals) and the others less in proportion. When, also, one considers that under the best conditions, a play seldom runs longer than thirty-five weeks out of the fifty-two, it will be seen that the player's income, estimated yearly, is not so enormous after all. There are, of course,

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exceptions, productions like *The Lion and the Mouse*, *Within the Law*, *On Trial*, etc., which ran practically the whole year through, but such runs as these do not occur often. The short run is the rule; the long run the exception. For example, a leading juvenile engaged at \$150 a week would have earned in thirty-five weeks \$5250, a modest enough income! If he is able to total only twenty-five weeks, which is a still fairer average, his income is only \$3750. With his personality and ability he could probably command more in almost any other profession. When, too, one considers that only a small percentage of players reaches Broadway, that the leading man or woman "on the road" receives, if lucky, an average of \$60 a week for thirty weeks, or \$1800 for the entire year, out of which they must pay for hotels, food, and clothes, making saving a sheer impossibility, is it surprising that one

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hears of distress among the rank and file of the profession?

└ One must also take into consideration that the actor's personal expenses are considerably higher than those of men of equal capabilities engaged in other pursuits, and this applies also to the actress. ➤ By necessity he must dress well. Two or three suits are not enough. He must have a dozen. He must patronize expensive tailors, the most stylish *bottiers*, shirtmakers, hatters. His cigars and cigarettes must be of irreproachable brand. In a word, he must keep up appearances of a man with many times his income. Thus he gradually acquires expensive, extravagant habits which in time become second nature and are hard to shake off when less prosperous days come, making retrenchments necessary. The actor seldom saves money. His environments make it almost impossible. Only very few ever ac-

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cumulate enough to ensure independence in their old age. Those prosperous players we see owning yachts and fine country estates are, as we have seen, stars who have had a substantial interest in the box office receipts. They must be considered the exceptionally favored of the stage. To the actor without private means, who is never lucky enough to attain stardom and who has not been wise enough to save money during the heyday of his popularity, there is nothing to look forward to in his old age, but the benevolence of that admirable charity, the Actors' Fund!

At the census taken in 1910 there were in the United States 29,000 persons engaged in the "show business." This included legitimate actors, vaudeville artists, circus people, etc. As the number had then doubled since the previous census, it is a fair estimate to calculate that there are to-day in this country 40,000 persons engaged in theatricals,

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50 per cent. at least of whom are legitimate actors.

During the year 1915 the applications to the Actors' Fund for relief reached the astonishing average of over two hundred a week. That is to say out of a grand total of 40,000 actors, or persons closely enough identified with the stage to have a claim upon the Fund, no fewer than 10,000 applied to that charity on the plea that the wolf was at the door and that they needed immediate pecuniary assistance—10,000 out of a total of 40,000—25 per cent.! The percentage is enormous and conveys its own lesson.

Seymour Hicks, a successful English actor, speaks of this large percentage of failures among players. "Is the stage," he asks,\* "the only profession which is appalling for its failures? Are not all pro-

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\* "Twenty-four Years of an Actor's Life," by Seymour Hicks.



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fessions equally so for the failures that are necessarily in them? No, for the morass to which that will-o'-the-wisp, the footlights, leads on its victims is one, perhaps, which has no equal. Men may throw aside the sword for the barrister's wig, a literary career for that of the mining expert, the position of a younger son at home for the Church militant abroad; *but* once let a man hear a round of applause for an individual effort, let him have stood for one short hour in the full glare of the limelight, and nothing on earth will ever make him give up the calling which he thinks has been his since the hour of his birth, nothing will make him fit for another profession."

Until quite recently actors have never taken any serious steps toward business organization. The Actors' Fund takes care of them when destitute or ill, but they had never attempted to unionize their calling in

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any way. Chafing, however, under certain alleged grievances, it was recently proposed that an Actors' Union, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, should be formed to better protect the players' interests. Some actors opposed the scheme, taking the stand that as practitioners of an "art" they should refrain from identifying themselves with "labor." Others argued differently, pointing to the musicians, also artists, whose union is one of the most powerful in the country. Finally, a meeting of actors was held in New York City to discuss certain unjust conditions of the actor's profession. The abuses complained of are many. Actors have often, recently, rehearsed for five weeks or even longer and received only three days' pay; indeed, in one or two cases nothing at all for their services. Companies playing in one-night stands have had to lose a Saturday night and its pay in

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order to jump to a Sunday night performance, for which they received no remuneration. Certain forms of contract now employed by some managers exact six weeks' work at half salary during the season, to wit: two weeks before election, two weeks before Christmas, and two weeks before Easter. Certain forms of contract contain a clause that obliges the manager to provide transportation only from the point of opening to the point of closing, instead of from New York to New York. Actresses have been required of late to pay out large sums for gowns, etc., which, in case of a play's failure, are a serious loss. Contracts with a corporation, without the signature of an individual, fixing personal responsibility, are used as loopholes through which the contracts are shirked.

The outcome of the players' getting together to discuss these and similar abuses was

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the formation of The Actors' Equity Association \* which has grown so rapidly that its membership now includes practically every well-known actor and actress in the country. Francis Wilson is president, Bruce McRae, vice-president, Howard Kyle, corresponding secretary, while some of the more prominent members include Maclyn Arbuckle, Edwin Arden, Ethel Barrymore, Blanche Bates, Richard Bennett, Holbrook Blinn, Louis Calvert, Charles Cherry, William Collier, Emmet Corrigan, William Courtleigh, William H. Crane, Arnold Daly, Frank Daniels, Julia Dean, Jefferson De Angelis, Leo Ditrichstein, Dorothy Donnelly, Marie Doro, John Drew, Wallace Eddinger, Robert Edeson, Leslie Faber, Douglas Fairbanks, Dustin Farnum, William Gillette, Ernest Glendinning, Nat C. Goodwin, Ferdinand E. Gottschalk, May

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\* See Appendix A.

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Irwin, Wilton Lackaye, Robert Mantell, Edith Wynne Matthison, Madame Nazimova, Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson, Annie Russell, Otis Skinner, David Warfield. These names alone, representing as they do the flower of the American stage, show conclusively that this new movement has the endorsement of the profession.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF A PLAYER

WHAT are the most important qualifications for success on the stage? What chance has an absolutely unknown person (male or female), without influence of any sort, to get a foothold on the stage? These are, perhaps, the two questions that most interest the novice not already discouraged by the foregoing recital of the drawbacks of the profession and the difficulties the beginner has to overcome.

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Joseph Jefferson, when asked the first question once, replied:

I should select three qualifications for success on the stage, sensibility, imagination, and industry. Sensibility, that you may be alive to your surroundings; imagination, that you may weave that into a graceful and interesting combination; and industry, that you may lose none of the precious moments that are given us here for the development of that faculty."

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Perhaps the persons most competent to answer the second question are those whose business it is to engage players for stage productions and who, in the course of long experience, have necessarily come in the closest contact with all sorts and conditions of stage aspirants.

David Belasco, America's most famous producer, needs no introduction to the readers of this volume. After a lifetime spent

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in the service of the theatre, and now at the zenith of his success, the opinion of David Belasco as regards the necessary qualifications to ensure success on the stage, means much to the stage aspirant. In reply to questions put to him by the present writer, Mr. Belasco said:

“Three qualities are essential for success on the stage—personality, pluck, perseverance.) I have often entrusted a small part to an actor or actress on the strength of personality alone, but first I have always had a talk with such applicants and become more or less familiar with his or her possibilities at the outset. I do not demand any particular physique or quality of voice in beginners. A poor physique can be corrected and a voice trained. The best qualifications are youth, ability, and beauty. If all three are combined, the player is well bestowed. Beauty alone or even youth are

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not nearly so important as ability. Many of the finest and greatest of actors have lacked beauty and in many cases even good looks. >Regarding the education of a player, in my experience, many of the greatest actors and actresses have been self-taught. Of course, a college education does no harm and is always good in any endeavor. College training is merely a sort of mental gymnastics to teach young people how to apply their minds. Amateur theatricals are also helpful. Anything that will aid and give experience in theatrical work is good—‘practice makes perfect.’ And I believe in the Dramatic School if conducted by competent teachers. As regards getting a foothold on the stage, any kind of work that one can obtain on the stage is good to begin with. One is always at the foot of the ladder at the start. The thing to do is to get on the first round and climb up.) The three ‘P’s’—



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Perseverance, Patience, Pluck, are what are most needed."

One of the best-known stage directors in this country is Mr. William Seymour, who for the last thirteen years has been producer and stage director for Charles Frohman. For over fifty years Mr. Seymour has been actively connected with the stage as actor and stage director. After acting with Charlotte Cushman, Edwin Forrest, Edwin Booth, Lester Wallack, Joseph Jefferson and other famous stars, he began stage management under Lawrence Barrett. In 1875 he joined A. M. Palmer at the Union Square Theatre and two years later went to San Francisco as stage manager for John McCullough. In 1879 he was appointed stage manager of the Boston Museum. The opinion of a man with his vast experience cannot be but illuminating and conclusive.

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“The qualifications I look for in a player, man or woman,” said Mr. Seymour, “are intelligence, enthusiasm, earnestness and personal magnetism.”

“What chance has an absolutely unknown person (male or female) to get a foothold on the stage?”

✓“The chance of opportunity, of applying to the manager just when he happens to need someone of your type—the psychological moment as we call it—and the ability to seize upon and improve the opportunity that is given. There is always ‘extra’ work to be had in the theatre, small parts to be given out which, in many cases, have proved to be good stepping-stones to success.”

“Would you, personally, entrust the smallest rôle, even a non-speaking part, to a person with whose work you were not familiar? In other words, would you take a chance on an applicant’s personality alone?”

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“ Yes—if the applicant’s personality combined apparent fitness for the part under consideration. I would trust a small part to an unknown person, as there is always the ‘ tryout ’ at rehearsal, and the rejection if said trial is not satisfactory.”

“ What appeals to you most in a stranger’s personality—his physique, his voice, or what? ”

“ The apparent adaptability to a part’s requirements—if there is a part in mind when the stranger calls. Of course, the personality—voice—intelligence manifested in conversation—all, or either may appeal, or he may be the actual ‘ type,’ and types go far nowadays.”

“ Is influence a factor in getting a position on the stage? ”

“ Not always. If the applicant has talent we shall soon discover it. If the novice has no talent, influence won’t help matters. The

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only help influence can be is that it sometimes opens a door and makes the way a little easier. An applicant with a letter from some influential person is more likely to be accorded an interview by a busy manager than a stranger. Of course, after that ability only counts."

✓ "Do you consider a college education necessary or desirable for the young actor or actress? Sir Herbert Tree and others say too much book study is bad for the actor."

"While not absolutely necessary, I believe a good ✓ (or college) education is desirable. But actual experience on the stage is better than a theoretical knowledge acquired in the library. Look over the list of great actors in the past and see how many had college educations. Very few, you will find." ✓

"Do amateur theatricals help or are they apt to get beginners into bad habits which it is hard to correct later?"

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“ I think amateur theatricals help a good deal in the way of giving confidence, and ease, and familiarity with the stage ‘business.’ One of the cleverest and most polished actors the local stage has known, Jacob Wendell, came from an amateur organization. As to bad habits, they are as easily acquired on the regular stage as on the amateur stage. I have rarely known of bad habits being corrected in, or eradicated from, actors or actresses. They become mannerisms, or peculiarities, and in many cases they are even assets to success.”

“ Are you a believer in the school of acting? If not, why? ”

“ Yes—for a ‘school’ can polish off the rough edges, point out defects of speech, or manner, and while it cannot make actors, it can develop latent talent.”

“ Is a better and more practical way to begin at the bottom and go up—to get a job



Byron, N. Y.

A FIRST REHEARSAL AND ACTORS READING MANUSCRIPT PARTS



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as call boy, a small or non-speaking part in some local stock company? ”

“ It is better in any profession to begin at the bottom; the best ship’s captain reaches the quarter deck from the forecastle. But to-day there are no such stairways for the development of ability as existed in the days of the old stock companies. There are no green rooms, no call boys, no lines of business! To-day it is a case of ‘ type,’ or physical fitness to a part, that builds to immediate success. Formerly, the utility man would advance, if worthy, in his second season to the position of ‘ responsible utility,’ in another season to ‘ walking gentleman,’ and so on. In those days the same plays were done year after year with the great actors in the stellar rôles, and the young actor had the opportunity of watching and studying the older one, and as he improved in his art, so his parts improved, until the highest rung



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of the ladder was reached—the leading business. Many of these toilers fell by the wayside, after a few years, but some of them went further and became stars—real stars—whose claims to such positions were founded upon labor, experience, knowledge of their art, and exceptional talent. To-day, the beginner of one season may appear as a star the next!”

“Is beauty an essential for women of the stage? Is it not a fact that some of the most gifted actors the stage has known, male and female, for instance, Cushman, Mansfield, etc., were not particularly prepossessing?”

“Beauty is a potent factor, and is of more importance to-day than it was fifty years ago. Many old-time actors and actresses were not beautiful, but they possessed genius in those days, and that counted for as much as physical charm, if not more.”

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“ Is it not narrowing to an actor’s mind to continue playing the same rôle season after season, thus depriving him of the opportunity to study and show his versatility in a multitude of rôles? ”

“ The value of the stock company was its opportunity for versatility. I believe in variety of work for an actor. Of course, one cannot overlook Joseph Jefferson and his thousands of performances of *Rip Van Winkle* or E. A. Sothorn in *Dundreary*, or John E. Owens in *Solon Shingle*. They did not become narrow. But, on the other hand, one is apt to forget that these actors had a varied training for many years before they became identified with the parts named. I have seen Mr. Jefferson act in six different plays in one week—also Mr. Owens. The fact of playing one part for a whole season does not prevent an actor from studying—from expanding, from growing. Nowadays,

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unfortunately, the actor is given little opportunity to prove his versatility. The managers have put the stigma of 'type' upon him. Once he makes a hit as a heavy villain or an English swell, or a cowboy, he is forever after slated as such."

A prodigious capacity for hard work, a great love for the dramatic art, an ambition that is not easily discouraged—these, perhaps, are the great essentials in the equipment of the stage beginner. The late Henry Irving, as a boy, had a habit which all young players might follow with profit. He said: "Before going to see a play of Shakespeare's I used to form—in a very juvenile way—a theory as to the working out of the whole drama, so as to correct my conceptions by those of the actor, and though I was, as a rule, absolutely wrong, there can be no doubt that any method of independent study is of enormous impor-

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tance, not only to youngsters, but also to students of a larger growth."

Irving was a conspicuous example of what sheer doggedness and enthusiasm for one's art will overcome. Austin Brereton in his life of the actor says: "The Edinburgh engagement was of vast importance to the young actor. It lasted for two and a half years, during which he played a marvellous number of parts. He also had the advantage of studying the methods of the best representatives of the old school of acting. To say that he worked assiduously during this period is only to indicate one of the merits which marked his life-work. Ever ardent and alert in the pursuit of his art, he was singled out in these early days for the scrupulous care with which he dressed his parts and for the exactitude of his facial make-up. More important still, he was almost invariably letter-perfect. He was con-

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stantly held out in these three paramount points of the theatrical embryo as a model for the other members of the company. Naturally enough, his perfection in these particulars created a certain amount of envy, but it won him a great deal of admiration. And, in later years, it was a tremendous aid to him. He had a nature thorough and determined. His work in Edinburgh, and subsequently in Manchester, strengthened these innate qualities, and as he grew in years so they developed, helping him to the summit of his ambition and never being allowed to desert him."

Edwin Booth once told Henry Miller that he acquired that grace of gesture for which he was famous from the use of the foils, and the artistic draping of his figure from dancing.

The late Richard Mansfield, himself a cultured and accomplished man, proficient

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in music, fencing, dancing, etc., insisted on the actor receiving the training of a gentleman. To a graduation class he once said:

“There is no profession that demands so many accomplishments. I do not say that you need necessarily be well born, but I do think that you ought to be well bred. Refinement of speech should be a stage qualification; you should know how to use your knife and fork, how to sit down. It is rather important on the stage that a lady or gentleman should know how to eat. The stage should be a teacher in everything. If you do not happen to have the advantages of early refinement in your homes, and you do not really know how a lady or gentleman should behave or should not, a man who is perfectly in earnest should travel and engage as a footman. He could watch at table or from his point of view on the carriage, in the drawing rooms, the methods of the public

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man. A young lady who has not had this advantage might engage as a lady's maid, and after a year, for women are much quicker than men, she would acquire all the methods."

Patience, too, is a quality the player should cultivate. Success does not come to the actor over night. He may struggle along for years before his talent is recognized. "We have been so long accustomed to the perfection of Jefferson's art," says Francis Wilson, "that we are apt to forget the struggle he had to acquire it. It was of slow growth and of thoughtful practical evolution. Let the student be encouraged to learn that Jefferson was long considered so imperfect an artist that Wallack and Brougham refused to permit him to appear at their theatre, then the only so-called legitimate one on Broadway."

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Richard Mansfield nearly starved early in his career. He was just as clever an actor before he appeared in *A Parisian Romance*, but none of the managers saw much in him. It was not until he made his sensational hit as the senile old Baron Chevrial in the Octave Feuillet drama that his worth was appreciated.

The actor should cultivate his mind. Felix Adler, the well-known educator, addressing some students, laid stress on this part of the player's equipment. He said: "Most of the people who fail in their careers may be divided into two classes: those who have no aptitude for their work, and those who have no really great faith in the things they are doing. If you are an artist, you must build up in yourself an explicit conception of the reasons why you think greatly of the dramatic art. In other words, you must think of the art as a great function



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which you are serving to society. It is not merely an opportunity for you to gradually obtain a considerable salary; you must think of it in the light of a service. Your art, like all the fine arts, has this service to perform. Remember that people often put up with the second-rate or third-rate, but that they appreciate the first-rate when they get it. Remember that your public is teachable, and never descend, out of respect for them and out of respect for yourself, to offer them less than the very best you are capable of. We are living in a period in which the great multitude of the intellectually unwashed, if you will pardon that expression, are invading the realms of literature and art, and a temporary deterioration of taste is in consequence unavoidable. In the long run, there will be built up a broader constituency of those who have been trained to distinguish between tinsel and gold. Make your art the

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means of becoming cultivated men and women. One can be a true inmate of the household of the interpreter only by being thoroughly and profoundly versed in human history, biography, and literature, and to some extent even science. No one can express what he does not possess. You cannot be a genuine artist unless you are a cultivated man or woman. | The difference between the mimic and the actor is just this: that the mimic is on the outside of the character, and sees the external side, the facial expression, the gait, the gesture, perhaps sees with great keenness, but he sees from the outside. The actor—the artist—takes his station in the inner man. He sees the character from within; he divines the deeper springs of motive, that gift of interpreting the inner mind. That is only possible, aside from the supreme genius who has it by intuition, if you learn to interpret human

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nature by social intercourse and make a study of human nature as it has manifested itself in history, in biography, and in literature. We will never have great actors in this country until we have men and women to whom their art is sacred, and see it in its great social function, and who are broad-minded, deep students of human nature with cultivated minds."

### CAN ACTING BE TAUGHT?

As to whether acting can be successfully taught is a question on which the theatrical doctors disagree. Some authorities, including Sir Arthur Wing Pinero, David Belasco, William Seymour, Joseph Jefferson, and others, are firm in their belief in the usefulness of the dramatic school. Others are equally insistent that an academic training hampers rather than helps the artiste. Irving did not believe acting could be

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taught. "An educated man who is an indifferent actor," he said,\* "can never expect to reach the front rank. If he do no more than figure in the army at Bosworth Field, or look imposing in a doorway; if he never play any but the smallest parts; if in these respects he be no better than men who could not pass an examination in any branch of knowledge, he has no more reason to complain than the highly-educated man who longs to write poetry, and possesses every qualification save the poetic faculty."

Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree has given expression to the same idea† in even more positive terms, and in view of the fact that Sir Herbert has a school of his own the sincerity of his opinion is not open to doubt. "The question," he says, "is answered in

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\* Address at Harvard University.

† "Thoughts and After Thoughts," by Herbert Beerbohm Tree.

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practice on the stage and I think triumphantly answered in the negative. . . .

*W*In acting, in fact, there is an infinity to learn but infinitely little that can be taught. The actor must be capable, of course, of pronouncing his native language and of having a reasonable control over the movements of his limbs, but thus equipped his technical education is practically complete. He is his own 'stock in trade.' *W*

Opposed to these opinions we have the view of such an authority as Joseph Jefferson, who expressed himself as follows: "It is said, I believe, we cannot teach acting. Many members of my profession insist upon that. They are wrong. I do not say we can teach emotion; we can not teach passion, wit, humor, or pathos."

Sir Arthur Wing Pinero, the leading dramatist of the modern English speaking stage, who was himself an actor before he

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began to write plays, is a warm champion of the dramatic school. He says: \* “For a man to venture upon the stage to fulfill duties, however slight, without first grounding himself in the technicalities is as gross an anomaly as for a man to attempt to paint pictures without knowledge of drawing or any developed sense of color. Instead of regretting that the course of provincial experience is no longer open to the student, we should perhaps rejoice that its trials and temptations are not now to be encountered; and in place of mourning the departure of the stock companies, we should cease to believe that their method of training was the only possible one. Now that the dirt and disorder of Bohemianism are swept away, are our musicians, painters, and our journalists less able? Have art schools and literary societies, which admit tyros as well

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\* Signed article in *The Playgoer*, London.

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as professors, stemmed the tide of artistic and literary production? I say, let the young aspirant, before he puts his foot upon the boards, learn the alphabet, the algebra, the Euclid, the grammar of the art he is ambitious to practise. I may be answered that the process of training which I recommend is costly. It is costly. I see no reason why one should expect that the training for a high and noble profession should not be so, and I am always at loss to understand why an aspirant for stage honors should embark on a theatrical career without preliminary outlay and with the prospect of immediate remuneration."

Another expert who thoroughly believed in academic training for the actor was the late M. Régnier, sociétaire of the Comédie Française and professor at the Paris Conservatoire, who had the reputation of being the greatest dramatic teacher of this century.

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“ A person is no more born an actor,” he said, “ than he is born a painter, a sculptor, or a poet. Nature doubtless provides the inclination—but this is not sufficient to make an artist. There is a grammar in all the arts. The player has his own. It is necessary that he should learn it and that he should know it. Stature, voice, instinct, inspiration, physiognomy are, of course, the great natural endowments; but they will be valueless if the actor has not added to them a complete knowledge of the secrets of his profession, if he does not possess command of the tools of his trade. In conclusion, I believe that for the actor neither chance nor imagination, or, as some call it, inspiration, can replace study. His aim should be to satisfy both the mind and the ear; to arouse simultaneously the applause of the great public by his tone and his acting, and that of the learned and the fastidious by the



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depth or the delicacy of his ideas. The professional instruction of the actor is not destructive to his originality, but is, on the contrary, a marvellous foundation for it. Ease in all the arts is almost always the result of work."

In Europe, where the dramatic art is taken seriously and the theatre recognized as one of the most important channels of education, second only to the school, there are National Conservatories, endowed and conducted by the State, where young histrionic talent is sifted and the best principles and practice of the art of acting taught by the best professors that the profession can provide. Masters of the art, veterans of the profession, are among the teachers at the Paris Conservatoire, the model institution of its kind, and each year take place public exhibitions of the students, the successful students immediately joining the

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companies of the State subsidized theatres, such as the Théâtre Français and the Odéon. The result of this interest of a paternal government in the drama is that France to-day has the most polished, the best trained actors in the world. The fact is also significant that ninety-nine out of a hundred of all the leading players on the French stage are graduates of the Conservatoire.

In Germany and Italy the situation is much the same. Indeed, in practically all the older civilizations on the Continent of Europe, except England, nearly every actor has received careful preparatory training in conservatoires or dramatic schools. In Germany, the first question asked by a theatrical agent is not "what experience have you had?" but, "What training have you received?" "What Theater-Schule did you graduate from?"

A superficial tendency of the American

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theatre is, in any estimate of actors, to place personality first, experience second, and training last. The dramatic profession is the only one in the United States in which the ignorant beginner is paid to be taught, and taught by a slow, laborious, confused process of picking his way through the mazes of theatrical experience, experimenting meanwhile before the paying public.]

[The necessity for an educational policy for the actor, not only for his general culture and the technical requirements of his craft but for the development of all his personal powers and faculties, is slowly but surely obtaining recognition. Indeed, the denial of the value of good educational preparation and systematic study calls in question the very right of acting to be termed an Art or a profession. The real problem in every logical mind that considers the subject is not whether acting can be taught but what kind of training is best.]

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Preparatory study and practice followed by apprenticeship in the theatre are the first stages of the never-ending studentship of the actor-artist. To begin right is of primary importance. Guidance and advice at the start can make or mar. Almost as great a risk is involved in beginning under poor stage-direction among wrong associates, or before low-class audiences, as in falling at the start into the hands of charlatans and tricksters.

### THE DRAMATIC SCHOOL

UNDER the present system of government in the United States it is doubtful whether a State institution conducted on the same lines as the Paris Conservatoire would be practical or even possible. The average hayseed legislator and pork-barrel politician who does not know Sardou from a sardine, has scant knowledge of, and less respect for,

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the drama. All plays are "shows" to him and it may take a hundred years more of culture before this unfortunate attitude of ignorance and indifference—very prevalent even among so-called educated people—towards what is one of the highest and noblest of the arts, is remedied.

There are many schools of acting in this country, but none of them are State institutions. They are private enterprises solely and it is obviously impossible to mention them all here, even by name. The oldest and best known among them is the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, New York, which, under the able direction of Mr. Franklin H. Sargent, has for many years been associated with the theatres and companies of the late Charles Frohman. The Academy was organized in 1884 and chartered by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. Its





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trustees are Franklin H. Sargent, Daniel Frohman, John Drew, Augustus Thomas, and Benjamin F. Roeder. The advising board includes David Belasco, William Gillette, and William H. Crane. Among its graduates are some of the best-known players on the stage to-day—Grace George, Helen Ware, Doris Keane, Mary Nash, Lucille Watson, Janet Dunbar, Laura Burt, Alice Fischer, Fernanda Eliscu, Mary Lawton, Selene Johnson, Christine Norman, Olive Tell, Phoebe Foster, Louise Closser Hale, George Fawcett, Brandon Tynan, Frederick Lewis, Pedro de Cordoba, Roy Atwell, and others.

└ One or two years' preliminary study in a good school of acting is unquestionably the best and quickest way to gain a foothold on the stage. The beginner's rough edge is taken off; he or she is given instruction in everything pertaining to the stage that it



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is essential to know—its literature, its mechanics, voice culture, English diction, stage business, make-up, etc., etc. Many of these things might be gradually and painfully acquired by actual contact and long experience with the professional stage, but some of them, such as English diction, would never be acquired, and the actor would always labor under this serious handicap. Going on the stage direct without passing through the school is, of course, the less expensive way. It practically costs the beginner nothing and yet in the end it may cost him more than if he had undertaken a year's course at some good school of acting.] The cost of a year's course at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, for instance, is \$400. Most of the students content themselves with the one year and for all practical purposes it suffices. Those who stay for the second year usually wish to make more

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elaborate studies in view of preparing themselves for some of the more important rôles. The student, therefore, must count on an initial cost of \$400 in addition to his living expenses while studying. In return for this he is so well grounded in the rudiments of his business that at the end of his year he is fully competent to seek an engagement in the best companies. [As a matter of fact, theatre managers in search of new material are in the habit of attending the school performances given during the year] (those of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts have for many years taken place at the Empire Theatre, by special arrangement with Charles Frohman) ] and picking out those students which appear to them most promising. Many players, now very prominent on the stage, got their first opportunity in this way.]

The stock company as a training school

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was a necessary product of the earlier and immature period of American theatrical history. The stock company of to-day differs from the old-time organization in both purpose and accomplishment. Its aim, with few notable exceptions, is the production of plays and representation of players with the least possible outlay of time, study, preparation, training, and expense. Its value is peculiarly for the experienced actor and practical for experience sake to the trained student beginner who has standards and who knows how to choose between the good and bad, and possesses sufficient skill and knowledge and ideals for his own safety in unsafe surroundings. The untrained, inexperienced beginner in the stock company of to-day is in a particularly unfortunate situation. He has no resources such as the older experienced or the younger and trained actors have, no standards of his art,

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no established modes of workmanship and study, and no time, inducement, or advantages for improvement or study in the best essentials of the actor's art. He is swept along in the tide of hurried preparation of many plays and frequent performances. Careless habits, imperfect ideas, and weakened ideals are the permanent outcome—combined with gain of assurance and clever sleight-of-hand and slight of lines.) Great credit is due those who succeed in holding themselves up, in breasting the tide and in avoiding the aimless drift that absorbs so many.

The old stock system of fifty years ago no longer exists. In that system the young actor had not only association with the most distinguished artists of the profession, but the advice and help of older members of the company. He was carefully trained in the reading of lines and "business" as ex-

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plained by a competent stage director, and given some drill in fencing, dancing, and singing. The beginner in the old stock theatre acquired a certain facility if not felicity of expression, a sharpened memory, knowledge, and skill on traditional lines following the example of his elders. His apprenticeship in this guild or company was on a par instructively with the mediæval and earlier unsystematized forms of education which lacked both the ethics and thoroughness of the modern development of a free and perfected use of all the special and temperamental powers of the individual.

In response to changing theatrical conditions, the educational needs of the theatre have to be met exactly as the needs in other functions in life, by an evolution from the crude, unsystematic mode of the stock company-guild to organized instruction for the education of actors, as paralleled by every other art or science.

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The would-be actor must be in possession of certain qualities which cannot be made to order, however much they can be strengthened and developed. These are good physical instruments, body and voice, a sensitive and responsive temperament, vivid imagination, quick instinct and natural dramatic intelligence. No one can make an actor, can create these powers essential to the actor. Nature must provide certain natural gifts, to be increased, refined, and perfected through educational means by condensing into a few months of study and practice the knowledge and skill of a large part of the essentials of dramatic artistry, equivalent, perhaps, to many years' actual experience on the stage.

A very general and fundamental error by managers is in accepting and encouraging young, inexperienced people without careful preliminary examination of their abili-

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ties. Not only would such a test determine whether the applicant should be encouraged or refused, but in every case certain merits and certain defects would be discovered, demanding either special and careful development or correction before the neophyte could be properly ready to appear before the public. Stage-managers are frequently obliged to interrupt their rightful work in rehearsal by stopping to correct technicalities and to explain and illustrate the most elemental facts and principles.

The entrance examination of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts offers an illustration of the possibilities of testing the qualifications of the stage aspirant. Questions and answers quickly cover the simple facts,—age, whether single or married, height, weight, proportions, physical condition, stage presence, personality, birthplace, general education, special training, amateur

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or professional experience, practice of any other art, occupation, nationality, and descent. Then follow tests of voice, speech, pronunciation, reading, memory acting, imaginary scenes and life study of mimicry. Further tests are obtained of the aspirant's dramatic intelligence, theatrical instinct, imagination, and, above all, temperament. Powers of characterization and versatility manifest themselves in recitations or in rehearsal. Record is made of all conclusions—and data obtained of technical merits and defects in voice, speech, interpretation, physical condition, and in pantomime. The main facts obtained serve as guidance from the very start for the instructors in their various special subjects.

The studies of a dramatic academy must necessarily be inclusive, because the training of the actor is at basis the education of the man. The actor is ideally the perfected



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human being who "is all that is, at will."

Theatrical skill and knowledge and stage technic are but a part and not the largest part of dramatic preparatory education. A human being can express only what he holds in actual possession. Such possession, in all the faculties, can be enlarged and the channels of expressive use opened and freed through dramatic studies. Health, body cultivation, action, and dancing and fencing are some of the fundamental parts of physical training. Vocal Culture, Phonetics, and English diction are essential subjects in Vocal Training. Stage Mechanics, Stage Business, Make-up, Costuming, and Art Decoration are necessary divisions of Stage Training. Not only dramatic analysis and the study of dramatic literature, but even the period and styles of theatrical art, even back to mythological times, should be known. All, so far, is preliminary, the first circuit

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in the race towards the ultimate goal of dramatic expression, of which the basis is the study of life, through observation and reproduction, through pantomime and vocal interpretation, eventually formulated in oral interpretation, pantomimic delivery and stage rehearsals. /Performances are necessary, not as exhibitions, but as final tests of skill and resources before the jury of an audience. The constant rehearsals and other public and private tests of plays under direction of the stage directors and special instructors—furnish a Stock Company experience in the better sense.) Modern and new plays must properly predominate with a good percentage of the masterpieces of the great writers, old and new. One important aim of the study and rehearsal of plays and their situations and characters is to establish the conviction in the young actors' minds that the representations of the

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theatre should be much the same as the expressions of life. The Truth of Life is the fundamental study of the Stage. Characterization is a search for and expression of the truth of nature represented without the interference of the personal interests and self-thoughts of the actor himself. The actor must have such control of his vocal and physical technic that they can always be made to serve absolutely the demands which the character exacts. Therefore technical and expressive studies are necessary preparations for the actor's personal equipment.

The first function of a Dramatic School is to discover and if possible prevent incompetency. The school can accomplish great good by keeping people off the stage who do not belong there. The dramatic school of the future can be a clearing-house for actors as well as a store-house of standards of the actor's art.

! To sum up: ability even with aspiration

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is valueless without studious application. It is not the function of the dramatic school to discover "stars" or to make geniuses, or indeed to make anything, but to develop the individual and to prepare him for the rank and file of the dramatic profession. The dramatic school at its best furnishes a condensed experience, personal development, and critical instruction, which equals in one year many years of ordinary theatrical practice.) When thorough and searching in its methods it necessarily discourages not only mediocrity but Bohemianism, and keeps off people who do not properly belong on the stage. It brings into the dramatic ranks educated and cultured people. Through such influx of educated, high-class, and self-respecting people its tendency is to improve the moral and intellectual character of the profession.) It is serviceable in training

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pupils to think and know to such an extent as to be helpful in other careers than that of the stage. The necessary breadth of dramatic study, ranging as it does from the study of life itself in all its forms, through the associated arts, literature, and history, to the highest imaginative analysis and expression, covers the essentials of a general education in its highest forms. The student of the dramatic school is able to go into the stock companies, poor though they may be, and not only not be injured by mechanical and surface methods, but be able to benefit intelligently by the opportunity of playing a variety of parts and of testing himself before varied audiences.)

### THE ACTOR'S VOICE

NOTHING is of greater value to the actor than the possession of a good voice and the knowledge how to use it. Correct enuncia-

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tion or utterance is an indispensable part of the equipment of every player. Probably every theatregoer, at some time or other, has experienced the annoyance of having to strain his ears in a vain effort to understand what is being said on the stage. One well-known actress, a woman whose intellectual force and brilliant technic have won for her a foremost position on our stage, is a serious offender in this respect. Her utterance is so jerky and explosive, so indistinct and inarticulate that at best the auditor can only guess at half of what she says.

The late Henry Irving was notorious for his bad diction. Faults of pronunciation and inflection, contracted early in his career, had never been corrected and his peculiarities of utterance grew upon him until later in life he became at times quite unintelligible. For all the person out in front knew to the contrary, he might have been speaking some

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foreign language. Reviewing the English actor's performances during one of his many tours of this country, an American critic once said: "He pronounces the English tongue as it is pronounced by no other man, woman, or child." And he proceeded to give a phonetically spelled version of Irving's delivery of Shylock's speech to Antonio:

"Wa thane, ett no eperes

Ah! um! yo ned 'elp

Ough! ough! Gaw too thane! Ha! um!

Yo, com'n say

Ah! Shilok, um! ouch! we wode hev moanies."

Yet, you say, both these artists achieved success. True, they triumphed in spite of faulty diction. But that is not an argument in favor of indistinct utterance. It was their genius in other directions that made the public overlook the fault. Less gifted

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players would have succumbed under the handicap.

“Irving once asked me,” says Ellen Terry,\* “if I thought the ill-natured criticism of his walk was in any way justified, and if he really said ‘Gud’ for ‘God’ and the rest of it. I said straight out that he did say his vowels in a peculiar way, and that he did drag his leg. . . . When it comes to pointing out an example, Henry Irving is the monument, the great mark set up to show the genius of *will*. For years he worked to overcome the dragging leg, which seemed to attract more attention from some small-minded critics (sharp of eye, yet how dull of vision!) than all the mental splendor of his impersonations. He toiled, and he overcame this defect, just as he overcame his disregard of the vowels and the self-consciousness which in the early

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\* “The Story of My Life,” by Ellen Terry.



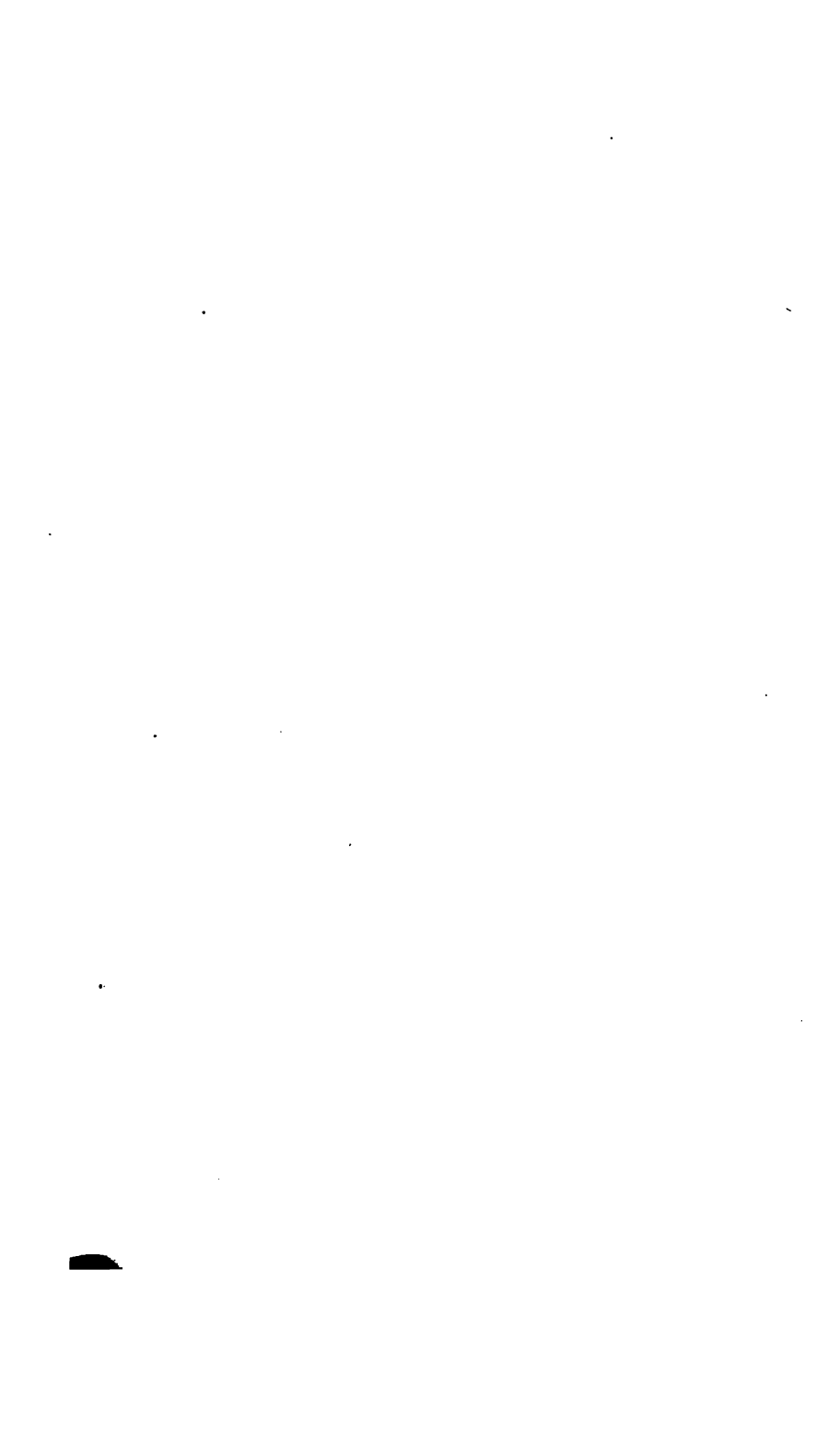
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stages of his career used to hamper and incommode him. His *self* was to him on a first night what the shell is to a lobster on dry land. In *Hamlet*, when we first acted together after that long ago Katharine and Petruchio period at the Queen's, he used to discuss with me the secret of my freedom from self-consciousness, and I suggested a more swift entrance on the stage from the dressing-room. I told him that, in spite of the advantage in ease which I had gained through having been on the stage when still a mere child, I should be paralyzed with fright from over-acute realization of the audience if I stood at the wing for ten minutes, as he was in the habit of doing. He did not heed me then, nor during the run of our next play, *The Lady of Lyons*; but when it came to Shylock, a quite new part to him, he tried the experiment, and, as he told me, with great comfort to himself and success with the audience."



Byron, N. Y.

MAUDE ADAMS DIRECTING A REHEARSAL OF SUPERNUMERARIES IN HER PRODUCTION OF "JOAN OF ARC"



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Ellen Terry, herself, for years has enjoyed the distinction of being considered one of the most perfect speakers on the stage, a mistress of the art of elocution. Her father, an actor with Macready and Kean, was a fine elocutionist and Miss Terry attributes much of her success to his early coaching. "My father never ceased teaching me to be useful, alert, and quick," she says. "Sometimes he hastened my perceptive powers with the slipper and always he corrected me if I pronounced any word in a slipshod fashion. Perhaps I was a born actress, but that would have served me little if I had not been able to speak. It must be remembered that both my sister Kate and I had been trained almost from our birth for the stage and particularly in the important branch of clear articulation. Father was a very charming elocutionist and my mother read Shakespeare beautifully. . . . In

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these early days they had need of all the patience, for I was a most troublesome, wayward pupil. . . . At breakfast father would begin the day's 'coaching.' Often I had to lay down my fork and say my lines. He would conduct these extra rehearsals anywhere—in the street, in the 'bus—we were never safe. I remember vividly going into a chemist shop and being stood upon a stool to say my part to the chemist."

No one understood better the importance of the voice to the actor than the late Joseph Jefferson. He put feeling and imagination above everything, insisting that gesture and elocution must of necessity follow. "The study of gesture and elocution," he said, "if taken in homœopathic doses and with great care may be of service, but great effects can be produced only by great feeling, and if the feeling be true and intense the gesture and elocution must obey it. It is safer,

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however, to study gesture and elocution than to study nothing. Better be pedantic and mechanical than indefinite and careless. The one at least shows a desire to please, while the other is insulting to an audience and I don't believe that audiences ever forgive carelessness. Besides, elocution will at least assist one in articulation and this important adjunct is too often slighted on the stage."

The late Richard Mansfield had a voice that was remarkable for its strength and flexibility. Mr. John Corbin, formerly dramatic critic of the *New York Times*, once wrote: "The touchstone of histrionic genius is . . . in the power of giving vibrant force and varied color to the verbal utterances of emotion. . . . Some excellent voices suggest silver. They do very well for the mind or movements of the heart, the palely reflected moonlight of the spirit. Mansfield's voice is pure gold. Even in its

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most delicate and colloquial shadings it has the fresh color, the unmistakable authenticity, of sunlight. Its anger is torrid, its rage scarlet; and when the shadow of defeat, despair, and even death, passes over and into it, it glows with the crimson and the purple of the sunset."

Mansfield compared the various moods and shadings of the player's voice to Nature's different colors: "Think of your voice as a color," he said.\* "There is the white voice; the heavenly, ethereal, or blue voice, the voice of prayer; a disagreeable, jealous, or yellow voice; a steel gray voice for quiet sarcasm; a brown voice of hopelessness; a lurid red voice of hot rage; a cheery voice, the color of the green sea that a brisk breeze is crisping; and then there is a pretty little pink voice, and shades of

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\* Address to the students of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts.

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violet——” He continued: “ You should speak good English. Very few people do. I am touching here, I think, upon one of the greatest evils and most formidable troubles. It is here that careful teaching is necessary in the pronunciation of words and the use of the voice. Who has not heard the terrible voice of the woman in the next room at the hotel? I have; in fact, it haunts me still. Be sure to know sufficient French to be able to pronounce any French name and French word decently, and not disgrace yourself and your company. It seems to me that anybody will succeed on the stage, in the church, or at the bar with a truly beautiful voice. Without it, it is hard work to charm. Learn how to use your voice, not to abuse it; how to preserve and reserve it; where to place the voice; never force the voice or betray its limitations. Even a small voice handled in that way would appear to be large



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when you are acting a part." On another occasion he said: "If I am playing a great rôle of Shakespeare then I need a large body of voice. If I am playing Richard III, as we play it, then I have to begin as a young man of character, gradually developing until he becomes old and steeped in sin; and yet through long hours of talking I must have that same immense power of voice at the end of the play that I had at the commencement, and yet I must have an entirely different quality of voice. Do you stop to realize that matter? Do you stop to think that in the old days it was a well-known fact that Edmund Kean, Mr. Kemble, or even Edwin Forrest, when he came to the last of the act and he cried: 'A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!' was very hoarse. Nobody heard it; he didn't have any voice left; but to-day we have studied so to guard ourselves as to gradually develop the voice

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so that at the end of the play we are as fresh and as voiceful as when we started."

One of the best women speakers the American stage has ever known was the late Sarah Cowell Lemoyne, the well-known reader and actress. Mrs. Lemoyne always insisted on the necessity of the player reading the lines well if he or she was to attain any distinction in the profession. "There is no such thing as a good actor and not a good elocutionist," she said. "Macready, Mrs. Kemble, Mrs. Sarah Siddons, Edwin Forrest, Miss Cushman, Helen Fawcett—and of our memory, the beautiful and charming Adelaide Nielson—were elocutionists, in many instances gave public readings before and after they became actors. Elocution helps acting, and acting helps elocution, and without the two you cannot reach a great height. To read your lines well is not alone to know how to pronounce a word, but it is to know how

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long to remain on a word, and it is necessary to know the value of your consonants and your vowels."

While the career of many players has been marred at the outset by disagreeable head tones, harsh, squeaking, or nasal, others owe their initial success to the beauty of their voice. A conspicuous example was Mary Anderson who, making her *début* as Juliet when only sixteen, at once captured critics and public with her beautiful voice. "Mary Anderson's voice," says William Winter,\* "was always her predominant charm; certain tones in it,—so thrilling, so full of wild passion and inexpressible melancholy,—went straight to the heart, and brought tears into the eyes. The voice is the exponent of the soul. You can paint your face; you can pad your person; you can wear a wig; you can walk in shoes that augment your height;

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\* "Other Days," by William Winter.

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you can, in various ways, change your body; but your voice will, sooner or later, reveal you as you are. Just as the style of the writer discloses his character, so the quality of the voice discloses the actor's nature."

Another actress noted for the beauty of her diction was the great French actress, Madame Rachel. Ristori,\* who speaks of seeing her in the rôle of Camille in *Les Horaces*, writes: "As soon as Rachel made her appearance on the stage I understood the power of her fascination. She looked like a Roman statue! Her majestic carriage, her regal bearing, the folds of her mantle, everything was presented with admirable artistic skill. . . . She possessed modulation of voice to a high degree. In the stupendous culminating scene, where we have the imprecation against Rome and the Romans, she uttered such accents of hatred, of rage, that the whole audience was frightened."

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\* Memoirs of Madame Ristori.

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Emphasis and pause, declares George Henry Lewes, are the supreme difficulties of elocution. "They are rarely managed by those who read blank verse, even in a room, and on the stage the difficulty is greatly enhanced. Nevertheless no one can pretend to be an actor of the poetic drama who has not mastered this art."

Articulation and pronunciation, says F. F. Mackay,\* the veteran actor and a recognized authority on stage elocution, are but the necessary mechanism of enunciation or utterance, the first factor of expression, by which the words, the signs of an idea, may be intelligently presented to the sense of hearing. He goes on to say:

"Any one with properly formed lips, teeth, tongue, and palate may articulate precisely, and, with memory, may always pronounce correctly. To neglect articulation

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\* "The Art of Acting," by F. F. Mackay.

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and pronunciation is to throw away two powerful assistants to the dramatic art; for, with perfection in articulation, the sounds, by the muscular action of the lips and tongue, are compacted and driven through the auditorium of a theatre to strike the auricular nerve of the auditor with a proper effect, like a bullet sent to the bull's-eye of a target from the muzzle of a gun; while sounds projected carelessly may be likened to a ball of sawdust that by atmospheric resistance is exploded and scattered, never reaching the object at which it was aimed. A few minutes of practice each day in the analysis of words, that is, resolving them into their elementary sounds, and doing them with the organs of articulation, will in a short time produce most gratifying results to the artist and to his auditors. The artist may find excellent practice in analyzing the second person singular of the indicative

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mood, present and past tense, of any verb in our language: *e.g.*, 'Thou trou-bl'st.' 'Thou trou-bl'dst.' 'Thou charm'st.' 'Thou charm'dst.' Every actor has a voice of some kind; either harsh or soft, squeaking or musical, orotund or thin, pectoral or nasal, guttural or head tone; and if the characters to be assumed were each fitted to the actor's peculiar quality of voice, he might always seem to be an artist. But the actor's art is not only limited, but sadly belittled when the dramatist is compelled to fit all of his *dramatis personae* to the natural conditions of the actor. In the expression of an emotion, voice is a powerful factor; and every actor may, if there be no physical defect, so cultivate his voice as to be able, through its changes, not only to re-present correctly the varying phases of emotions, but also to present a repertoire of perhaps three or four distinct characters without allowing his individuality to appear."

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The average actor's diction is so bad that he is unintelligible. It is a serious fault of our stage that each season seems to be getting worse instead of better. As a writer in the New York *Tribune* wrote recently: "Our stage certainly needs a standard of English. Often, in the same cast, we listen to all varied accents, from the soft slur of the South to the drawl of New England, not to mention such occasional absurdities as 'shooicide' for suicide, produced in a moment of desperately intense pseudo-English by a young actress in *Business is Business*. We do not object; we hardly notice such incongruities, which are serious flaws; though when an occasional English company visits us we go into ecstasies over the purity, the homogeneity, of its English, if it be only in a light production like *A Pair of Silk Stockings*."



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Conditions in this respect are different abroad. At the Théâtre Français such careful attention is paid to pronunciation that the language spoken there is considered throughout the country as a standard of correct speech. It is much to be regretted that our theatre directors are not as careful.

### PERILS AND PITFALLS

I ONCE asked a prominent theatre manager what in his opinion was the percentage of those young players who, once given an opportunity, persevere in their efforts to obtain a firm foothold on the boards, and eventually win recognition on the stage.

"Possibly five per cent.," he replied. "Some get discouraged at the start, realizing that they are unfitted for the life, or finding the surroundings uncongenial. They drift into other occupations, becoming doctors, lawyers, business men, etc. The girls, as a

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rule, are less easily discouraged. The feminine temperament is, perhaps, better suited to the high nervous tension of stage life. For that reason, the percentage of women beginners who eventually win out is higher."

George Arliss, a popular and distinguished actor, who, having himself reached the top of the theatrical ladder, is in a position to judge how long it takes a player to gain any kind of recognition, has expressed the opinion that it generally takes ten years.

Addressing a class of students recently he said: "My observation has led me to the conclusion that it generally takes about ten years for an actor or actress to become acknowledged—before his or her ability is accepted at its real value. I believe that in nine cases out of ten—I think I should be within the mark if I said ninety-nine out of a hundred—it takes ten years to get to the top of that first hill. Having got

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there, it is really rather pleasant; you are worn out and anxious at first, but you soon get over that when you find yourself a good supporting actor; find that you are really wanted for certain parts; wanted so badly sometimes that a manager is willing to give you five or ten dollars a week more than he originally intended to pay for the part. Then you are really getting on."

In an address on Edmund Kean at the University of Oxford Henry Irving recounted the early struggles of that famous player—experiences which must have reminded him of his own. He said: "For many years after boyhood, his life was one of continual hardship. With that unsubdued conviction of his own powers which is often the sole consolation of genius, he toiled on and bravely struggled through the sordid miseries of a strolling player's life. The road to success lies through many a thorny course,

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across many a dreary stretch of desert land, over many an obstacle, from which the fainting heart is often tempted to turn back. But hope, and the sense of power within, which no discouragements can subdue, inspire the struggling artist still to continue the conflict, till at last courage and perseverance meet with their just reward, and success comes. } The only feeling then to which the triumphant artist may be tempted is one of good-natured contempt for those who are so ready to applaud those merits which, in the past, they were too blind to recognize."

A grave danger incidental to stage life to which young players of both sexes are liable to fall easy victims unless at the very start they realize the danger and have sufficient strength of character to resist is the use of alcoholic stimulants. Stage fright is a well recognized symptom among actors, especially with beginners. Some actors never



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overcome this nervousness, even veterans. To the novice, nothing seems easier than to take a "bracer" of some kind before going on "to steady one's nerves." As a matter of fact, nothing could be worse. Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree and Richard Mansfield, among other well-known actors, have both pointed out this peril. "In order to emancipate the mind from self-consciousness," says Beerbohm, "in order, in fact, to be at his best—the actor will sometimes have recourse to stimulants. This habit has proved the ruin of many a great actor. In his effort to reach that tingling condition of the nervous system which enables him, in forgetting himself, to impress his audience, the actor may find the grave of his career."

"When Richard Mansfield began to play Chevrial," says his biographer, Paul Wilstach, "he nursed the impression that he was not equal to the vital energy of the perform-

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ance without stimulants. One night a friend, who happened to be a doctor, saw him sip the pint of champagne, which was the allowance he felt the work demanded, and pointed out that he was making a false start, for soon a pint would be impotent and his system would demand a quart; champagne would soon be too weak, so would whiskey, then brandy, and the way led straight to drugs. Mansfield recognized his friend's logic, and after that night determined not to touch stimulants from the time he rose in the morning until he reached home after the performance, when he allowed himself Irish or Scotch, with soda, during a friendly hour of relaxation. Sustenance was a different matter. During a long, taxing performance he often took a dish of broth, a sandwich of minced beef, or some such simple food."

F. F. Mackay, an old and experienced

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actor, has also touched on the subject. He writes: " Young actors who aspire to do the ' juveniles ' or lovers in dramatic art, will find it greatly to their advantage, in personal appearance, to keep up their gymnastic exercises, such as sword playing and dancing, and to avoid feasting at late suppers. The actor must be willing to make some sacrifices if, as an artist, he would gain and hold the approbation of the public; for while the actor is feasting with ' jolly good fellows,' his art is fasting. He is bartering vital force and public approbation for the ephemeral admiration of those whose friendship, in many instances, is begotten of the exhilaration of wine, and dies with its effervescing. Such friendship lives only in the sunshine of the actor's prosperity, and, with the first chilling breath of adversity, this good-fellow-friendship floats off on its butterfly wings, and leaves the actor to that



DAVID BELASCO SOMETIMES MAKES IT A PRACTICE DURING THE REHEARSAL OF A PLAY, NOT TO LET HIS ACTORS GO OUT TO LUNCHEON, IN ORDER THAT THE GENERAL HARMONY OF THEIR STAGE RELATIONS SHALL NOT BE DISTURBED. MR. BELASCO (SEATED ON EXTREME LEFT) IS SEEN HERE ENTERTAINING HIS COMPANY AT LUNCHEON IN THE GREEN ROOM OF HIS THEATRE.



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depression which must necessarily follow a false stimulation. If one desires to be a true artist, he must avoid those methods which earn for the actor the name of 'good fellow.' "

Many young actors have not listened to good advice and have continued their indulgence in stimulants with fatal consequences to themselves and their art. The one drink gradually became several drinks until, finally, they have become confirmed drunkards. It is common knowledge among those well acquainted with the theatre and its people that many a gifted young actor, popular with his manager and fellow players, a great favorite with the public, with everything in his favor, good looks, fine physique, great talent, commanding a large salary—has suddenly gone to pieces at the very zenith of his success. A victim of this fatal habit, he gradually loses his hold. Late at rehearsals,

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unreliable at performances, forgetting his lines—the end comes quickly. Managers lose confidence and refuse to engage him, and gradually he sinks lower and lower. There is no remedy. The damage is done and cannot be undone. Efforts of friends and managers to save him are unavailing. Unable to face the inevitable, unstrung, half crazed—the unfortunate victim of his own folly does away with himself, scarcely missed by the public who once crowded to see and applaud him. This may seem an exaggerated picture, but it is not. Everyone knowing the stage well, knows it is only too true. There have been many such cases, and there will be more. Not only actors, but actresses as well, have come to grief in this way, and, if you care to trace back for the cause, you will find it in that “innocent” cocktail taken to “brace” the nerves that night when, pale and trembling under their cosmetics, they

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faced that dreaded bogey, a theatre audience, for the first time.

Lack of proper study has often ended in disaster to an actor. "Once Irving was called upon," says Austin Brereton, "to play Cleomenes in *The Winter's Tale*, an undertaking with which he had to 'double' the part of a 'third gentleman.' The part is a fairly long one for a novice, and, unfortunately for the aspirant to theatrical honors, the revival was fixed for Monday. Irving's religious training had taught him to hold Sunday as a day of rest, and, relying upon his powers of study, he left the learning of his words until the day of the performance. The result was unforeseen, almost disastrous. All went well until the fifth act, when the young actor completely forgot his words, and, interpolating some lines from another play, exclaimed, to the astonishment of his comrades on the stage, 'Come on to

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the market-place, and I'll tell you further,' and vanished into the wings. His manager, however, put down his failure to the natural nervousness of the novice, and, instead of dispensing with his services, gave him some sound, practical advice. This was an unpromising beginning, but it had its lesson, for it was the first and last time that such a fault was ever committed by Henry Irving."

### SOME DON'TS FOR ACTORS

JUST as there are things that the stage aspirant should do, there are other things which he should not do. "Do not try to be eccentric," said Richard Mansfield. "You may have certain eccentricities, but do not try to have them. Do not try to further yourself by long hair or odd manner of speech. There is not any necessity for this. You can probably do your work just as well

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in short hair. When a man has recourse to eccentricities of dress or manner, it is an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible possession of weakness. He has called attention by this pose to himself to help himself. If he has got all that is needed to become great, it is not necessary to wear long hair and queer clothes. Do not imagine you are different from the rest of the world because you are an actor. Great humility of dress or attire is just as conspicuous as over-dressing, and a man who goes to an evening party in a business suit is as conspicuous as the person who attends a morning function in evening dress."

There's a false idea prevalent among stage folk of a certain class that the more personal publicity the greater one's success. This is an error. Real fame cannot be manufactured out of newspaper notoriety. Sarah Cowell Lemoyne warned beginners against

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this tendency. "Avoid publicity," she said. "Now that seems strange, because the life of the actor is so public, but let your publicity be absolutely and wholly confined to your public appearances upon the stage. Remember there is an old saying that 'the more reserved, the more observed.' People will tell you to-day that that sort of thing has gone out of fashion, but believe me it is as true to-day as it was one hundred years ago—'the more reserved, the more observed.' Be known to the public only through your work. Avoid all undue notice in the public press. If the press sees fit to notice you, let it come from them. Never seek it. Never vulgarize yourself by any false statement about yourself. Remember always that the best thing we do in life is wholly represented in our work; no matter what you do, you are judged by your work. Work alone tells. If your work is noble and

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beautiful it is a great gratification to the public to learn somewhat of your personality, but let your personality be described by another, and by another through his love and his honesty and belief in those qualities that you possess."

Never forget the dignity of your calling. The outside world is ever ready to criticise the behavior of the player, and sometimes with good reason. Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson, in a recent speech, referred to this lack of decorum in some actors. "I have noticed men," he said, "and even women, not behave as they should at a rehearsal. They have talked loud in the wings, making much noise as they walked about, and I have found of late a certain attitude of flippancy. I remember being very much distressed by a woman's actions some years ago. She had just left the stage and it was my turn to go on. She came off



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with a bang, speaking loudly and behaving wretchedly. She did not take the trouble to lift her dress—her manager's, my property, by the way—tripped over it, came down with a loud bang, and with other loud and distressing remarks, went to her dressing-room. Many actors suffer from such actions as these and I am sorry to say they seem to be on the increase. When we come into a theatre, to us a temple, it is due to ourselves to act quietly and with respect to ourselves and others, so that we may be looked on by everybody outside with respect."

### BOOKS A PLAYER SHOULD READ

THE young actor and actress should neglect no opportunity to further his or her mental development. The players who have made the most lasting impression on their contemporaries were intellectual. Conspicuous examples are Edwin Forrest, Tommaso Salvini, Eleanora Duse, Henry

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Irving. A taste for reading should be cultivated and the selection of books should not be confined only to the subject of the drama, but should embrace every branch of art, such as sculpture, painting, architecture, music. Even works of fiction are useful in developing the mind and quickening the imagination.

The student should make himself thoroughly familiar with at least one play of each of the great dramatists, old and new, from Sophocles to Ibsen, including, of course, Shakespeare.

Among the books every player should read are:

Dramatic Literature .....Schlegel  
A Study of the Drama....Brander Matthews  
The Theory of the Theatre, Clayton Hamilton  
On Actors and the Art of  
Acting .....George Henry Lewes  
The Renaissance of the Eng-  
lish Drama .....Henry Arthur Jones  
Essay on the Theatre.....Dr. Bellows

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- The Paradox of the Com-  
 edian .....Diderot  
 Study and Stage.....William Archer  
 Joseph Jefferson's Autobi-  
 ography .....  
 The Drama and Life.....A. B. Walkley  
 English Stage .....Mario Barsa  
 A History of Theatrical  
 Art .....Karl Mantzius  
 Art of Acting .....Fitzgerald  
 The Greek Theatre.....Donaldson  
 English Dramatic Litera-  
 ture .....Ward  
 Apology .....Colly Cibber  
 Defense of the Stage.....Calcraft  
 Other Days .....William Winter  
 Life of Edwin Booth.....William Winter  
 Life of Shakespeare.....Sir Sidney Lee  
 Aspects of Modern Drama.Frank Wadleigh Chandler  
 ? —→ On the Art of the Theatre..Edward Gordon Craig  
 Life of Henry Irving.....Austin Brereton  
 The Story of My Life....Ellen Terry  
 The Life and Art of Rich-  
 ard Mansfield .....William Winter  
 Fifty years of an Actor's  
 Life .....John Coleman  
 Reflections on the Actor's  
 Art .....François Joseph Talma  
 Art and the Actor .....Constant Coquelin

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### COMPENSATIONS

IF the player's life has its sordid side, it likewise has its compensations, and, perhaps when the final balance is taken, the young man or woman who approaches the stage in the right spirit, who is not merely attracted to it as a showy, conspicuous way of earning a living, but who is filled with respect for its glorious traditions, and imbued with the determination to be, above all things, an artist worthy of the name, loyal to the best ideals, devoting to the dramatic art his or her best energies, the most sincere and earnest efforts of which he or she is capable—then they will probably find in the theatre as much happiness—if not as great a pecuniary reward—as in any other career.

If there is about the players' calling one feature more discouraging than another, it is its ephemeral nature. In most professions—medicine, law, engineering—one is gradu-

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ally building as the years pass. By the time old age comes, leisure has been well earned, a competence at least has been assured, whereas the actor, all his life a rolling stone, has gathered no moss at all. The player, unfortunately, works in a perishable medium. Others carve in granite. He touches the human heart and mind but for a fleeting moment. Most of the great actors have commented upon this and lamented it.

Yet what a picturesque, interesting career to look back upon! What wonderful reminiscences, notable associations! The thrills and terrors of "first nights," the intimate contact with those out in front, the keen delight to the artist of impersonating a character well, and holding the audience in the hollow of his hand, watching your every action, the distress of failure, the delirium of success, and then the patter of applause which to the thespian's ears sounds like golden rain from Heaven!

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The feverish excitement of the player's life, the keen mental stimulus, the impersonation of all kinds of characters, from kings to beggars, the delivery of the poet's majestic, impassioned verse, the utterance of the dramatist's noble thoughts, the smart turning of a clever quip, with the audience across the footlights intent on every word—this is a sensation accorded only to the few, and gives zest to the life of the actor.

All actors whose names will live after them have loved their art. They have loved it for itself, not for the money or fame it earned for them. With Joseph Jefferson and Edwin Booth it amounted almost to a sacred passion. When William H. Crane's wife, thinking her husband weary of the stage, asked him why he didn't stop acting, he replied: "Because I like it. I do like it. I may say I love it." Thackeray wrote: "I have seen no men in life loving their

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profession so much as painters, except, perhaps, actors, who, when not engaged themselves, always go to the play."

The love an actor has for his profession is what distinguishes the true artist from the commercialized actor. Not all our players are tailors' models. There are many on our stage to-day who are artists in every sense of that much misused word, gifted, painstaking, self-respecting men and women who deservedly stand high in the public esteem and who in ability and zeal for their profession rank second to none in the world. Sincere, earnest, ambitious, they themselves resent the new conditions which they are powerless to remedy, and deplore the ever-spreading commercialization of the stage, which tends more and more to lower the standard of the art of acting and of the theatre itself.

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## APPENDIX A

Standard Theatrical Contract. Proposed by the  
Actors' Equity Association

### FORM A

#### CONTRACT WITH TWO WEEKS' NOTICE

AGREEMENT made this.....day of....., 191 ,  
between.....(hereinafter called "Manager")  
and.....(hereinafter called "Actor").

#### Agreement of Employment:

1. The Manager engages the Actor to render  
services in the play entitled.....  
upon the terms herein set forth, and the Actor accepts  
such engagement.

#### Period of Employment:

2a. This employment is to begin, and the Actor's  
pay is to start, within two weeks of.....  
day of....., 191 , (hereinafter called  
date of opening), and to continue until terminated by  
notice as herein provided.

#### Compensation:

The Manager agrees to pay the Actor the sum  
of.....Dollars weekly, for services covered  
by this agreement.

Rehearsals are to begin not earlier than 35 days  
prior to the date of opening just specified.



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2b. Either party may terminate this contract by giving upon or at any time after the date of opening above specified at least two weeks' written notice.

Exception a. If, however, the Actor is required to rehearse more than four weeks, then for each week's rehearsal in addition to four weeks the Manager shall give an additional half week's notice in order to terminate this contract; except, however, that if under this engagement the Actor has received two weeks' work and pay, plus one-half week's work and pay, for each week's rehearsals over four weeks, then only the two weeks' notice of termination shall be necessary. In the computation of time occupied by rehearsals they are to be considered continuous from the time of the beginning thereof to date of opening, and idle time shall be counted for the purpose of determining length of notice of termination of this contract.

If the above play is a musical comedy, or a spectacular production having a cast exceeding 50 people, then wherever the word "four" appears in this paragraph, the word "six" shall be substituted.

Exception b. If the above play is heretofore unproduced and the Manager shall finally discontinue its production after less than six weeks' presentation by the Company of which the Actor herein is a member, then provided said Actor shall have received two weeks' pay, plus compensation covering extra rehearsals as provided in Exception a, the Manager may terminate this contract without notice.

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2c. If this contract is signed within 30 days of the time above agreed upon for the beginning of rehearsals either party may terminate it at or before the end of the first week's rehearsals with or without cause. Rehearsals are not to be paid for except as hereinbefore provided.

3. The Actor agrees (a) to be prompt at rehearsals, to perform his services in a competent and painstaking manner, to pay strict regard to make-up and dress, to abide by such reasonable rules and regulations as the Manager may make, and to render services to him exclusively; (b) To furnish and pay for such morning, afternoon, and evening clothes customarily worn by civilians of the present day in this country, together with wigs and shoes necessarily appurtenant thereto as may be needed; all other clothes, wigs, shoes, costumes, and appurtenances and all "Props" to be furnished by the Manager.

If the Actor is a woman the following clause supersedes 3b: The Manager shall furnish and pay for all dresses, hats, appurtenances to costumes and all "Props." Footwear and wigs for modern plays to be furnished by.....

4. Not more than two matinees weekly, in addition to matinees given on legal holidays of the State in which the Company is playing, plus performances during all evenings when such performances may legally be given, is hereby agreed upon as a week's work. All other performances shall be paid for at

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the rate of one-eighth of a week's salary for each performance.

### Transportation:

5. The Manager hereby agrees to pay for transportation of the Actor when required to travel, including transportation from New York City to opening point, and back to New York City from closing point. The Manager also agrees to pay the cost of transportation of the Actor's personal baggage up to Two Hundred Pounds weight. Transportation does..... include sleeper or parlor car fare, .....the expense of carriage to or from hotel, station, or theatre.

It is mutually agreed that if, as provided in paragraph 2b, this contract is cancelled on two weeks' notice by the Manager, he agrees to pay the transportation of the Actor back to New York City. If the Actor gives the aforesaid two weeks' notice, he or she agrees to pay the Manager the transportation of the successor to join the company, as well as his or her own transportation back to New York City.

### Lost Performances:

The Actor shall travel with the Company by such routes as the Manager may direct, and in the event of unavoidable delay in travelling, so as to prevent the performance of the Company, for such time so occupied in travelling, or delay, the Actor will not demand any compensation to which he would otherwise

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be entitled if a performance or performances had taken place during said period.

It is further agreed that if the Company cannot perform because of fire, accident, riot, Act of God, or the public enemy, or if the Actor cannot perform on account of illness or other valid reason, then the Actor is not to receive any salary for the time during which said services shall not, for such reason, or reasons, be rendered.

The Manager has the right to lay off the Company without salary for the week before Christmas, Passion Week, or both weeks if desired.

### Rules:

6. All rules and regulations shall be in writing, and shall be delivered to the Actor personally, except matters which refer to the Company in general, which may be posted upon the call board. Notice to the Manager may be given to him personally or to the Stage or Company Manager. The Actor shall not be deemed to have waived his right to object to an unreasonable regulation because he fails to protest against it while the Company is on the road.

### Arbitration:

7. In event any dispute shall arise between the parties (1) as to any matter or things covered by this contract; (2) as to the meaning of the contract or its application—to any state of facts which may arise—then said dispute or claim shall be arbitrated.

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The Manager shall choose one arbitrator and the Actors' Equity Association the second. If within three days these arbitrators shall not be able to agree, then within that time they shall choose a third who shall not in any way be connected with the theatrical profession. If they fail to do so ..... or his appointee, shall be the third. The arbitrators shall hear the parties and within ten days decide the dispute or claim. The decision of a majority of said arbitrators shall be the decision of all, and shall be binding; said decision shall be final. The arbitrators shall determine by whom and in what proportion the cost of arbitration shall be paid. The parties hereby appoint said Board its agents, with full power to finally settle said dispute or claim, and agree that its decision shall constitute an agreement between them, having the same binding force as if agreed upon by the parties themselves.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hands and seals the day and year first above written.

.....*Manager*

.....*Actor*

# TRAINING FOR THE STAGE

## APPENDIX B

### General Rules for the Guidance of Actors During Performance Drawn Up and Approved by the Actors' Equity Association

1. All actors engaged in the presentation of a play must report at the theatre for performance at the time designated by the manager or his representative.

2. After the posting of the proper notice on call board, all rehearsals must be attended promptly on the hour designated, and when travelling, actors must be at the railway station at the time specified on call board.

3. Any actor who shall be guilty of conduct calculated to bring disrepute upon the organization, renders himself liable to immediate discharge.

4. No actor shall publicly indulge in speech or action that shall be inimical to the success of the organization.

5. Actors prevented from attending to their duties by indisposition must send notice to the manager a sufficient time before performance to make the necessary arrangements for a substitute or understudy. Pleas of indisposition must in all cases be accompanied by the certificate of a responsible physician. In cases of illness the manager reserves the right to withhold or pay salaries.

6. No actor will be allowed to go into the audience part of the theatre on the same afternoon or evening

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on which he is to appear or has appeared on the stage, without the consent of the manager.

7. The stage manager has full control behind the curtain. Any and all exceptions to his rulings must be referred to the manager.

8. All actors must play their parts in the performance as rehearsed unless otherwise directed by the manager or his representative.

9. No actor shall address the audience during the performance without the consent of the manager.

10. The actor shall be ready to begin at the time designated by the manager, and shall not keep the stage waiting at any other part of the performance.

11. The actor shall not create unnecessary noise or disturbance behind the scenes or in the dressing-rooms.

12. No actor will be allowed to introduce friends, relatives, or strangers behind the scenes or in dressing-rooms, without the consent of the manager or his representative.

13. Any actor appearing on the stage, either at rehearsals or performances, in an intoxicated condition will be liable to immediate discharge.

# TRAINING FOR THE STAGE

## APPENDIX C

### AUTHOR'S NOTE

In light of recent events this statement may properly be regarded as too sweeping. When 2000 British actors voluntarily face death at the front to serve their country and when a large number of representative American actors show their patriotism by marching in New York's big Preparedness Parade, the player cannot justly be accused of indifference to public questions. It should be remembered, however, that throughout this book criticism is directed not at the better class and more intelligent actor, but at the average player.

NOV 17 1916





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